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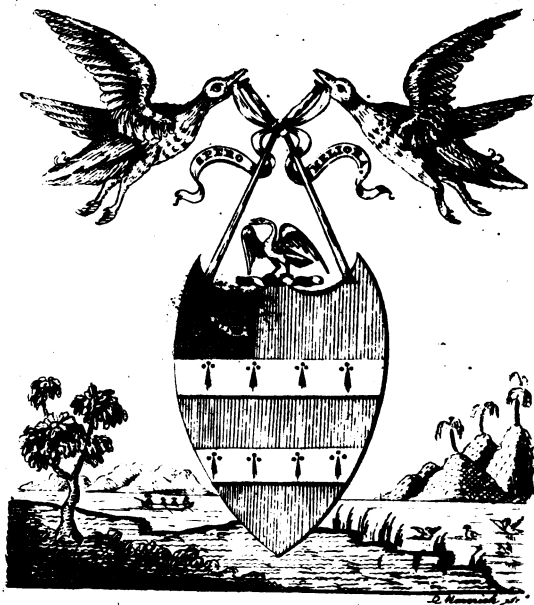
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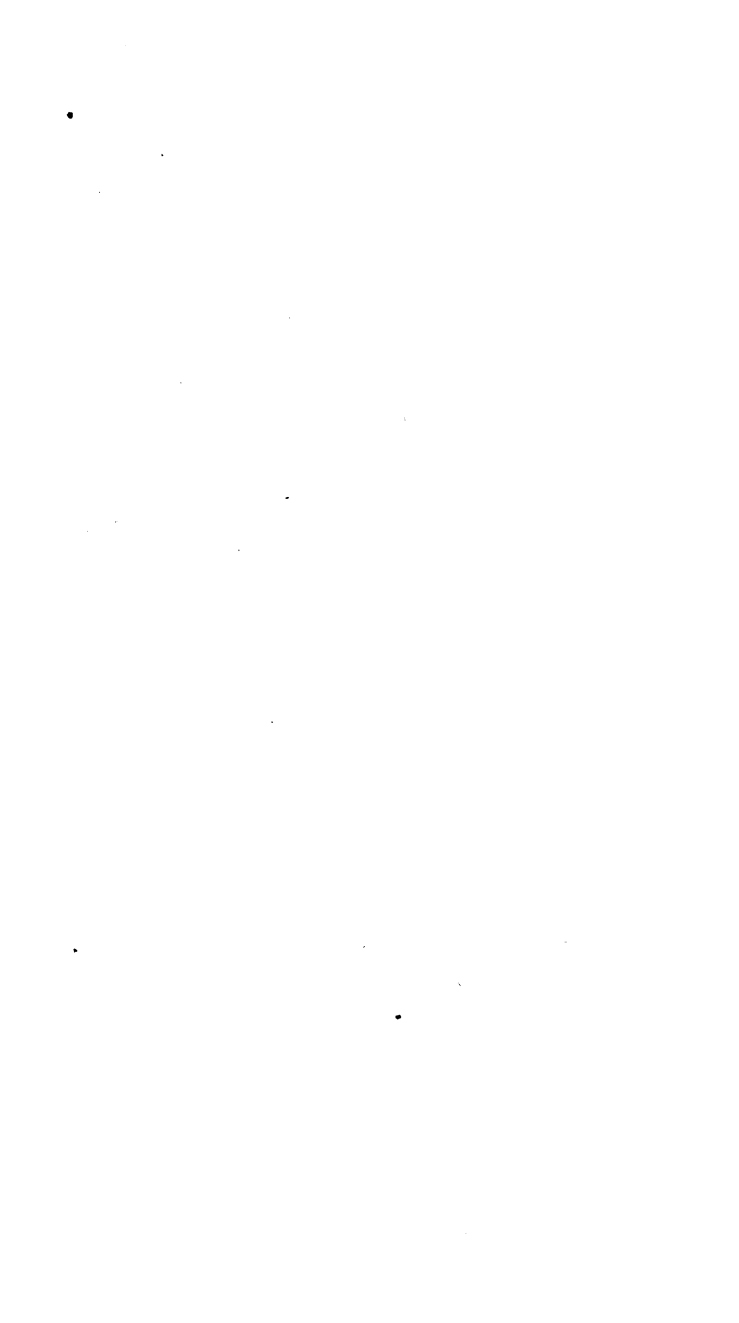
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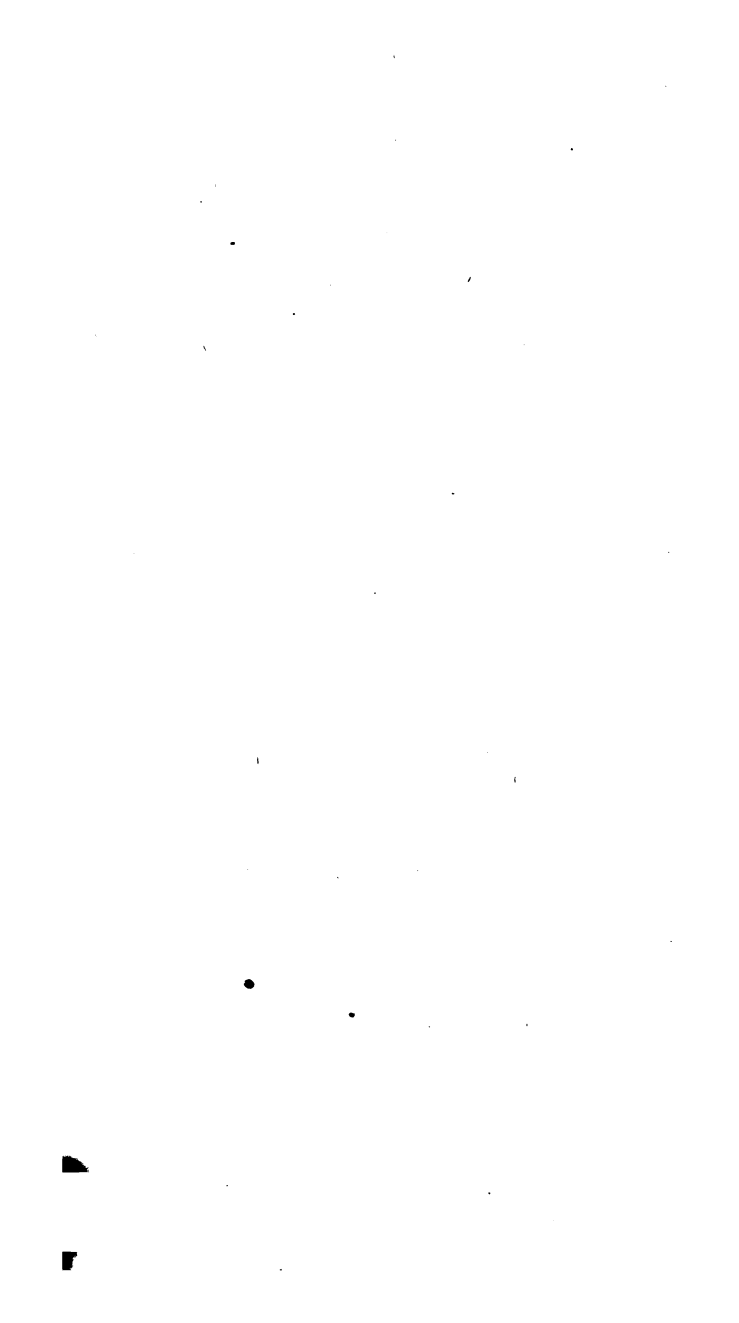


*Francis Canton Junr.*

Letters  
NCV







LETTERS

FROM

HENRIETTA

TO

MORVINA.

INTERSPERSED WITH

ANECDOTES,

HISTORICAL AND AMUSING,

OF THE

Different COURTS and COUNTRIES through  
which she passed.

Founded on Facts:

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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LONDON:

Printed for J. Bew, No. 28, Paternoster Row.

MDCCCLXXVII.

*Gifted*  
**NC**





# L E T T E R S

F R O M

H E N R I E T T A

T O

M O R V I N A.

\*\*\*\*\*

## L E T T E R XXVI.

My dear Sister,

**Y**OU wish not more ardently to hear, than I do to tell you the fate of my friend, who we left in the most horrid of all situations. The instant coffee was over, the Prince carried the Count into his apartment, in order to examine him on the cause of the duel. His answers were rather evasive. At length he entreated the Prince would no

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B

more

more insist upon his revealing, what his honour told him he ought most religiously to conceal, assuring the Prince he had risked his life to preserve unsullied that honour which had been, and he hoped ever would be, a thousand times dearer to him than any other consideration on earth ; that the Duke, when he was perfectly recovered of the slight wound he was unfortunate enough to give him, intended to go to his country-house, which was within a mile of the Prince's chateau, and would, he durst say, satisfy his Highness in all he wanted to know. The Prince was himself too much a man of honour to exact from others any thing contrary to its laws, and only desired to see his wound, or rather the mark where it had been. There was still a slight dressing on it,  
more

more by way of prevention than any immediate necessity. The sword had run in between the *ribs*, directly opposite to where the heart should point when it is rightly placed; had it met the Count's there, he would probably have been no more. The good Princess was all this time endeavouring to reconcile her daughter to herself, the only being she seemed at enmity with, advising her strongly to treat the Count with that degree of confidence he might reasonably expect, from the situation chance had thrown them both into; to treat him *de haut en bas* would be ridiculous, and absolutely inconsistent with the candour and ingenuity of her heart. She doubted not, she said, but the Count would seize on the first opportunity which offered, of throwing himself at her feet, and decla-

ring his reconnoissance for the honour she did him ; in which case there was nothing left for her but to receive his professions with a becoming dignity, and to assure him of her friendship while he continued to deserve it : and now my dear, added she, it depends on you, whether or no you will give your hand to the amiable Count, and when ; only let me from experience tell you, few men esteem the woman who from vanity or coquetry judge it mete to trifle with their happiness ; and every woman who marries puts it in the power of her husband to pay her back with interest. The world is ever on the side of the husband, however blameable ; his own sex are ever ready to support him ; infinitely more faithful to each other than ours, the majority of which readily chime  
in

in with *their* opinion, and abandon the wretched woman to the misery of her own mind, and the contempt of others. You are, my dear, ill able to judge from your father and me, of a marriage state. We are peculiarly adapted to each other, and one will, one soul, has actuated us both since our happy union. Pray Heaven that may be your lot. But you will have no right to look upon one less grateful to a fond and sensible heart, severe, when you compare it with that of mankind in general ; and nothing to do, but to make the best of whatever falls to your lot. The Prince and the Count put an end to the conversation; the Duchess arrived in a few minutes after, and almost immediately followed her the Marquis de Bellarmine, and the young Count Bonatini. Cards were brought, during which

frequent opportunities presented themselves to the Count de ———; (for Adeline never played) but overwhelmed as he certainly was with what he called love, and what all the world terms vanity, &c. he wanted courage to make use of those opportunities he had so ardently wished for; which is nothing strange, when we consider there is a charm in modesty, a native dignity, that strikes an awe, a reverential awe, into the very soul of the most abandoned profligate. To *that*, much more than the extreme delicacy my poor friend supposed him actuated by, was his silence owing. The Duchesse seemed fatigued; supper was ordered earlier than usual. To *that* was attributed her want of enjoüement, which never shone more bright than at table, and exceeds all power of description. But  
it

it arose from a cause much more grievous; much nearer her heart than any bodily pain she could suffer: she loved, she idolized her sister, saw the imminent danger that awaited her, that she was upon the very verge of a precipice of all others the most dreadful. She viewed the Count de ——— with impartial eyes; saw that vanity was, and ever had been his ruling passion; that the unsuspecting, amiable Adelina had only to become his wife, to be sacrificed to each new comer. Possession would shortly extinguish the flame he avowed, perhaps imagined he felt for her at that time; whilst her's for him was indelibly written in her heart; and the unlucky discovery of it have no other effect than that of encreasing his vanity, heightening that superiority his tyrannic



mind would naturally incline him to usurp over an angel, the instant she was become his property, and would undoubtedly render her poor sister wretched, should she have strength of constitution to enable her to outlive a change so brutal in the man she had distinguished above all the world. To foresee, to feel all these evils, without the power to prevent them; to know no remedy which was not a thousand times worse than the disease, was a heavy weight on the mind of the Duchess; enough to sink her spirits into a state of dejection. She wished to talk to Adelina apart; yet what had she to say? To oppose her marrying the Count, after such an eclat, would be highly imprudent; nay, further, perhaps injurious to her reputation; a thing she could never maintain too dearly.

dearly. To make distant evils appear present by reflection, was both injudicious and cruel, as would be the attempting to lessen him in her esteem; therefore nothing remained for her to do, but to put the best face she could upon the matter, and keep the addition she always intended to make to her sister's fortune, in her own hands, until she had (as she much feared she would) more occasion for it, and take every opportunity that offered of founding the Count's sentiments on his approaching good fortune, exalting his ideas of Adelina's understanding, which her youth and inexperience had probably made him under-rate. Be that as it may, he had the address to convince the Duchess of the contrary: and this shews we should not fix our opinion of either persons or things on the vague

B 5 credit

credit of appearances, which are at best equivocal, often false. In short, in a few days she believed as she wished, that the force of her sister's charms had wrought a miracle, and reformed the most notorious rake about the French court. Tho' the Duchesse had never spoke in dispraise of the Count de ———, the Prince and Princess, as well as Adelina, were not a little pleased to find her each day more and more inclined to favour his suit to them, and rather wish to hasten, than protract their intended union. At the same time she could not but highly approve her sister's desire of convincing her lover sensuality bore no part in her passion for him. The trembling awe with which he accosted the lovely Adelina, on meeting her alone in the gardens, after this tacit declaration of her partiality for him,

raised

raised him not only in *her* esteem, but in that of her sister, from whom she kept nothing a secret. Adelina was seated on a sofa composed of moss in a St. Austin's cave, a book in her hand, which appeared to draw more of her attention than the love-sick Count wished to spare, or than *he* deemed consistent with an heart in love. He attempted several times to enter the cave, but observing her thoughts were too fully employed to perceive him at such a distance, he apprehended his nearer approach might alarm her, and was going away, when she suddenly called out Who is there? The man born to adore, and protect the divine Adelina, replied *he*, and who would live no longer than she will allow him that privilege. Take care, Count, said she, encroach not on my privacy, nor

presume from one proof of my weakness, I shall be guilty of another, or recede in the smallest tittle from the uncontested privilege of *my sex*, implicit obedience before marriage, we all claim our due ; therefore leave me instantly. We should *avoid all appearance of evil*. I will hear what you have to say at home, where black-mouthed slander can neither wrong your intentions, or my fame. My mind, when you approached this sequestered solitude, was fixed in contemplating the virtues of the holy man whose name it bears ; exalted far above all earthly objects ! Begone ; farewell. He stayed not to answer, but flew to prove that obedience *he* knew would be of short duration, and which he would (ere she was aware) make her pay back with interest. This rencontre having spoiled her

her

her contemplations, she soon returned to the house, but meeting the Duchess at the door of the saloon, equipped ready for walking, offered to accompany her. They turned into an alley which led into a covered walk half a mile in length; the trees on each side were cypress, and myrtle of an extraordinary large size, with woodbines and jessamine twining round them. At the end was a temple, inferior in size only to Solomon's. In short, it is the prettiest mignon thing in the universe, and dedicated to Pudicitia, the goddess of chastity or modesty, who stands at the upper end, habited in the character of a Roman matron; a long robe and veil: she is mentioned as more immediately relative to the marriage bed. This brought on a conversation poor Adelina ardently wished for; but so strict

a votary

A votary was *she* to the *Goddeſs*, that without her aſſiſtance ſhe had never been able to enter upon it, even to her beſt loved friend and ſiſter. She told her the adventure in the garden, and when ſhe had once entered upon the topic, concealed from the *Duchefs* no one thought of her ſoul, or action of her life. *She* approved extremely of *Adelina's* conduct; but adviſed her no longer to decline coming to an *éclairciſſement* with the Count; to obſerve narrowly and impartially *his* manner of hinting ſo very delicate an event as was the diſcovery of her penchant towards him. On the oppoſite ſide of the entrance into the temple was a door which opened into the *orangerée*, which, without aid from the neighbouring ſweets, perfumed the whole atmosphere. *There* they ſpied the  
love-

love-sick Count, wasting sighs sufficient to blow every blossom from the trees; and romantic enough had that happened, to fancy himself thrown out of a second paradise, and expect momentarily to see briars and thistles spring up in their place, to curse his pride, and mortify his ambition, which dared to soar above the reach of mortals, and hope to possess a being only made to be adored. But to quit these high-flown ideas, and enter once more into the sublunary world. The Count started some paces back, on seeing the amiable sisters. The Duchess called to him, desired he would join them. They walked some time, talked on general topics, till her Grace seemed rather tired, and Adelina proposed going home. The Duchess would not allow that, said she would return to the temple,



temple, and amuse herself with a book till Adelina had finished her walk, and collecting flowers for the bouquets they were to wear that evening at a little dance the Prince intended giving in a grotesque building, at the end of his woods, which separates them from those of the King. The lovers being left together, the Count found courage to expatiate amply on his passion for the adorable Adelina. How rapidly it had increased from the time (he must own) he had allowed himself to cherish some hopes it might meet with return, yet he had never presumed on those hopes so far, as to deviate in the smallest degree from the respect, the heart-felt delicacy, he ever had, and ever must maintain for her. Few lovers perhaps could boast that power over themselves. I grant you

all

all you say, replied Adelina, but have I nothing in me to inspire that respect, that awful homage inseparable from love; if I want *those* requisites, may every other charm fade ere morning dawns, nor leave me the ability of exciting in others a flame I am myself incapable of feeling, and hold in foul contempt. Mistake me not (my dear Princess) answered the Count with warmth and confusion, I deny not your power, I feel its force; is it kind, is it humane, to oppress the wretch, who, while he groans beneath the yoke, kisses his chains: this suspense is, to a generous mind, worse than a thousand deaths: mercifully put an end to it, or to an existence you have rendered insupportable to me: happy indeed had been my lot, had I fallen by the Duke of ——'s sword,

sword, and been by you lamented.  
 What sin so horrid, of so black a *die*,  
 have *I* since committed, to cause this  
 change, this cruelty in that heart where  
 benevolence and tenderness alone should  
 dwell. Here tears, marked with the  
 deepest sorrow, stopped all power of ut-  
 terance, and were indeed enough to melt  
 a more obdurate heart than that he had  
 to deal with. She was so thoroughly  
 touched with his situation, as to allow  
 him to go back with her to her sister,  
 who she promised him should settle pre-  
 liminaries between them. The moment  
 she entered the temple, the Duchess  
 cried out, I see you have both been teiz-  
 ing each other, and that I must be at  
 the pains of soliciting Adelina to follow  
 her own inclinations: yet trust me,  
 Count, what you, and most men may deem  
 caprice,

caprice, in her arises from a delicacy which you will one day find your account in, and that you have not paid too dear for the possession of it. At the same time, my dear sister, let me conjure you not to suffer unnecessary scruples to make you defer your own happiness, much more the happiness of him I know you love, and prefer to your own. Confess the passion you have long cherished for the Count ; I know the purity, the delicacy of it is such, you need not blush to acknowledge, even under the auspices of Pudicitia. The Count fell on his knees, blessed the Duchess, entreated her Grace would lend him her aid to procure a promise of making him the happiest of human race, if she would not date the blessing. She not only granted his request, but solicited Adelina

with

with zeal little inferior to the Count's, begged she would go beyond the boon he asked, and fix the day to render him, her whole family, and herself completely happy ; that she well knew the Prince and Princess impatiently waited her determination ; every thing had long been ready on their part. Poor Adelina wept, and in a trembling voice, blushing replied, my dear sister, assist me, spare me some of the pain I must feel in telling the Count he has long had my heart ; my hand shall seal its constancy ; and *that* I will give him any day the *Prince, Princess,* and you, my dearest *friend,* shall fix, till when I hope I shall see him easy, cheerful, and be able to appear enough so myself not to draw the eyes of the whole world upon us, wherever we are. He assured her of his prudence, that it should

should even curb that joy, this more than fortunate event would naturally throw him into. They returned thro' the delightful bosquet I have already described to the house; separated to dress for dinner; *that* over, the whole company, which consisted of about forty in number, got into their carriages, and drove to the Maison du Bois, where elegance reigned in its greatest splendour. The evening being beautifully serene and bright, they all alighted from their carriages, and walked up an avenue which leads to the building. The trees which made this avenue were stately oaks, that must have peeped at least at that glorious prodigy, that wonder and adoration of *his* own, and every other age and country, the Gallic Henry, that truly legitimate offspring of Mars, and pupil of Mentor.

Mentor. At the bottom of this terrace runs the beautiful river Seine : you have frequent views of it through these venerable oaks : the slope between the walks and the water is planted with every shrub pleasing to the eye, or grateful to the smell, and the terrace terminates in a Gothic gateway, o'er-run with ivy, where stands an old porter, who held that office under the Prince's father ; though you may discover the marks of time in him, not one of discontent appears ; peace and plenty sat in his countenance. He opens the gates with the cheerful hospitality and benevolence of the Prince his master, which lets you into a beautiful lawn, covered with small sheep and lambs, pheasants of every different kind, Guinea, pea fowl ; in short, every species of the feathered race. At-

tendant

tendant on these animals were twelve boys and twelve girls, dressed in a sort of uniform, extremely neat, all green, with crooks and white hats, the boys beaver, the girls straw. Under a shed, overgrown almost with honeysuckles and vines, sat a man and woman falling into the decline of life, capable from their little erudition, as well as knowledge in the paths of life they trod, of directing these youth in the way of truth and virtue at least. They were suffered to remain under their care until they had reached their thirteenth year, when they were put out to any trade they seemed turned for. A constant succession of the poorest, most destitute to be met with in the neighbourhood, kept up the number. Within half a mile of the spot we found them in, this man and



woman had a house, where were two tolerable rooms, besides a hall, on the ground floor; above they were divided into as many small cells as there was inhabitants for them: one room however in the center, larger than the rest, was occupied by the pere and mere of the society. A little chapel there was, adjoining to the house, adorned with every thing necessary to keep up the true spirit of devotion, without raising it to an enthusiastic pitch. Morning and evening the bell never failed to call this little fold, as well as all else who chose to come to offer up their oraisons to the great origin of all their blessings *here*, and hopes hereafter. From hence we went into the house, where musick, festivity, joy in every heart, content in every countenance, impatiently waited

our arrival. The Prince and Princess left us walking, and got into the house time enough to receive the company in the saloon, which was truly great. Architecture was carried to the highest pitch of magnificence; the floor was of the finest white marble, the roof supported by six pilasters of porphyry. The ceiling (which was very lofty) painted by the best master of the time, small figures, and in compartments: it contained the history of most of the battles, as well as the amours of Henry the Fourth of France; and I have never seen any portrait of Henry, or the Duke de Sully, that more strongly resembled them than these paintings do. The chairs are wood, finely carved, and appear like small trees, with seats in them, in which are cushions of green and white flowered

silk. The foliage of the chairs are so exquisitely wrought, you would swear they were growing, until you touch them. The Prince ordered no more than fourteen servants to attend ; they were all dressed in green, with a narrow silver embroidery down the coat and waistcoat, buttons of the same, their coats short, silver belts and couteau de chasse, plain ruffles, and thread stockings, as more in character with the rest. They shewed us into a drawing room which beats all description ; the tapestry of the forest kind, simple, but elegant ; the sofas, fauteuils and carpet, all in the same taste. Within this was a smaller room, furnished entirely with green silk, except that the window and door curtains had a very narrow silver fringe round them. The heads of the nails  
 in

in the sofas, &c. were silver : the ceiling of each room was the fine old stucco. Music and cards was called for ; a few minuets danced before the Princess retired with her company to cards. The Duchefs of B—— and Adelina, with *their* company, danced till eleven o'clock. In less than half an hour, the doors of the room where they had been dancing were thrown open, and the most elegant supper imaginable appeared. That scarcely over, six of the most beautiful young women, the age of Mademoiselle, habited like shepherdesses, entered the room, kneeled down to her ; the first, presenting her with a crown of myrtle, and a petition, in the name of the *rest*, entreating she would no longer defer *their* happiness and her *own* ; that the priest waited her commands, and they

to follow the example she should set them: in the utmost confusion, she turned her head round, and beheld a group of shepherds offering in the same manner a petition to the Count. The Prince and Princess warmly seconded their request to Adelina, who, with the lowest obeisance, replied, it is too much for you to intreat, where you have every right to command. The Prince led her into the inward room; the Princess with the Count followed; after them the whole company; and the priest performed the ceremony to the whole seven at the self-same time. The ceremony ended, the six brides and bridegrooms again fell on their knees, offering up their most grateful thanks and warmest wishes for every future bliss pouring down in abundance on the Countess,

when

when her Ladyship presented each shepherd with a purse of gold, in dowry with his wife. The Count gallantly begged leave he might give them something for pins ; he doubted not, he said, the force of their charms gaining them every influence they could desire, yet he must confess, he could ill endure the thought of any woman's being dependant on the will of her husband. The carriages were at the gate, and instantly conveyed the whole company to their respective homes. The next day, to avoid the tiresome ceremony of awkward country visits, the Prince and Princess, bride and bridegroom went with the Duchess of B—— to a chateau she had twenty leagues from Paris, where they remained till the time of *their* going to *Paris*. It was agreed that the Count

and Countess were to live with the Prince the three first years after their marriage. But the poor Prince was killed within the year, in defending a place of very little value. The Princess survived him near two years, unfortunately too long for her, as it led her into the knowledge of her youngest daughter's cruel destiny, notwithstanding she and the Duchess took all possible care to conceal it from her. Whilst the Prince lived, the Count thought it worth his while to keep measures with the Countess, though at that time he kept an opera girl privately, and behaved with so much tyranny towards the poor Countess, that no one thing on earth, but fear of rendering the Prince and Princess wretched on her account, could have prevailed on her to endure the violence of his temper (which

he had the hypocrisy to suppress till they retired to their own apartment) made her miscarry of her first child, and it was not without difficulty she went through with the second. There was nothing harsh, nothing brutal, he did not act towards her ; nay, he carried it so far, as to tell her he was persuaded to marry her, and thought he had uncommon merit to live with her at all. Judge how it must hurt a woman who had not only made his fortune, but who had charms enow to purchase kingdoms, and who was the admiration of all who knew her. On the death of the Prince he gave farther latitude to his horrid ill-nature. *Villains* are always *cowards*, and he had no longer to fear any body would call him to account for his cruelty to the Countess. He probably wished the Princess out of the way,



for the sake of her jointure, and deemed adding to the affliction she was before overwhelmed with the most likely expedient to bring it about. But to pretend to think with such a being, is an affront to my own heart and principles. He declared himself a freethinker, but his coward heart gave his tongue the lie, for he trembled at the least shadow of danger. Not long before the poor Princess died, she had the mortification to be obliged to dismiss her daughter's woman, whom she had educated in the strictest principles of the church she professed, from his having cruelly debauched her, and her being within a few weeks of her time. This, and many similar events, determined the Countess to live no longer with him than decency required, after the death of her mother, which, to her  
 sorrow,

tomorrow, she beheld hourly approaching,  
 and believed *her* other misfortunes did  
 not a little hasten the greatest that could  
 befall her. The Princess did not long  
 outlive this last scandalous procedure of  
 the Count's. The last month of her life  
*he* was (to her great comfort) obliged to  
 attend the court, and leave her to enjoy  
 her dear daughter's company in peace,  
 the short time she had to pass with her  
 on earth. His ill natured disposition  
 could not help repining at that. The  
 Princess saw her end approaching with  
 true Christian heroism, wished often to  
 talk upon the subject to the Countess,  
 but feared hurting her gentle nature.  
 However, she found her strength hourly  
 fail her, and had many things she wanted  
 to say to the Countess, both for her *own*  
 ease, and *her* good; therefore sent for her

one morning, and ordered all the attendants to leave the room. After a few minutes pause, to recover her spirits, rather in a flutter, My dear Adelina, said she, your lot is certainly severe, extremely so; such it appears to us at least; but sorrow and disappointments are the common lot of humanity; the terms on which we hold our charter: trials are necessary for us in this state of probation; nor is it mete we should choose the mode of them; were that allowed us, I doubt we should often pass by the most salutary means to obtain the wish'd-for end, which are graciously made use of by the Almighty Father of this immense universe, to bring us back to himself. I have not a wish to linger here, save for your sake, and that is less ardent from the certainty I have, your amiable sister will,

as much as possible, supply my place to you. Her house will ever be an asylum to you from the brutal rage of the wretch who calls himself your husband ; yet, my dear, I trust you will endeavour to acquit yourself of your duty, as a wife and mother, should Heaven send you another child, in the room of that sweet babe we all so unreasonably lamented. To grieve was natural ; but to repine against the divine will, unwarrantable. Your sister will be *here* some time this evening. I have left every thing in *my* power to *her*, in trust for you, and in such a manner as your own tender affectionate heart cannot leave you destitute, to gratify the vicious turn of your abandoned husband. Forgive *me*, my dear Adelina ; I freely forgive all my enemies, and *he* is the greatest I ever met with :

may the Almighty forgive him, turn his heart, and permit *me* to spend my life's small remnant to *his* praise and glory, with my children and family. Upon this the poor good Princess wiped her eyes, and rung her bell. When her attendants came in, they told her the Dukes of ——— had been come some time, but would not allow them to disturb her Highness. She ordered them to shew her in, and the scene which ensued is much too tender, too interesting for description to attempt; it was all the most sensible heart can conceive humanity capable of feeling; the Princess, worn out with fatigue, required rest; the ladies, when they had administered what her physicians had ordered she should take, left her to that repose her Highness stood much in need of, and which, while they

they were by, she could never have prevailed on herself to take. The ladies had not long retired before dinner was announced; they sat down with little appetite, and soon finished. The attendants dismissed, they entered upon the subject nearest their hearts, lamented in the bitterest sighs of sorrow, the shortness of the time they dared to hope Heaven would vouchsafe to lend them the fondest parent, the tenderest friend, and best of women. The Duchess would have talked of the Count, and assured Adelina of her inviolable friendship, but she declared she had not a single thought to bestow on either the Count or herself; she was perfectly satisfied of the Duchess's affection, had the highest honour for her judgment, and should, whenever she had the misfortune to lose her mother, put herself

herself entirely under her Grace's direction. Scarce had they ended this conversation, when one of the Duchess's women came to tell them her Highness desired their company. They flew with eagerness, but alas ! it was only to hear her tell them she had but a few hours she believed to live ; that she desired to have her director spiritual sent for ; it was instantly done. Her Highness called for her keys ; gave them to the Duchess ; told her she would find every thing there, amongst the rest, a letter for the Count, which she desired her to deliver to him. The Duchess and poor Adelina kneeled by her bed-side, bathing her hands with their tears, until the priest arrived. They then retired, left the Princess to her private devotions, which were soon over : for what had *she* to confess ? Nothing, but

but the feelings of the best human heart existing. She had many trials ; she felt them ; but she bore them with a fortitude becoming the greatest hero of the other, and a religious resignation becoming either sex. The blackest sin her Highness ever committed might be absolved without enjoining penance. Her daughters, and attendants, down to the very lowest, were called to hear mass, and communicate with her. Her Highness talked familiarly to them all, blessed them, wished they might all feel the comfort of a conscience void of offence (as she did) in their latest moments, advised them to persevere in their attachment, &c. to her daughters, who would never leave them destitute, when worn out with age and labour in their service ; and they would find *she* had not left them wholly dependant.



dependant. They answered only with sighs, tears, and prayers, that her Highness's soul might quit its mansion *here* with as little pain as possible. They then withdrew. The Princess called the Duchefs to her, told her she felt she had but a very short time in this world, and wished she and her sister would leave the room: I fear, my dears, you will be ill able to sustain the shock of seeing me in the act of dying, though from the Heaven I now feel within, I do not apprehend it will be violent. They both seemed reluctant to leave her. She then added, let me take leave of you for the present, however; trust me, it is better for us all: she kissed them tenderly, prayed for every blessing on them here; above all, that of a calm contented spirit, without which, all the rest would be of  
 little

little avail; *that* alone would keep them in a temper of mind to enjoy this life, as well as fit them for a better, where I trust, my dear children, said she, we shall meet again. She turned round, prayed ardently, yet with a composure which spoke all right within. The poor ladies had barely reached Adelina's apartment, before this amiable woman resigned her breath to him who gave it, without a groan. The Priest was sent to acquaint them with it. He was a sensible, a good man, therefore felt for them much, but said little to stop the torrent of their grief, the edge of which he well knew must be somewhat blunted, ere it would allow them to listen to reason's voice; neither did he dissuade them from going to visit the remains of the poor Princess, who appeared no more than sleeping, with  
a pleasing

a pleasing smile upon her countenance. They would not suffer her to be moved until the third day, though contrary to the custom of France; besides, that her Highness had desired she might not be embalmed, but interred on the seventh day after her decease. They saw every tittle of her will most religiously performed, then leaving that delightful habitation, (rendered insupportable to them by the loss of the Princess) set out for the Duchess's house I have before mentioned. The rage and disappointment which seized the Count, on finding he had nothing to say to the Princess's effects, made him give up all appearances, and fear of the King only made him put on mourning. He determined to live no longer with the Countess, and instantly attached himself to the most abandoned

abandoned of women, sprung from the lowest and meanest of the people, who, after having exhibited her charms to the highest bidder for some years, had the art to draw in a silly young Englishman, whose original was little better than her own, but who, by the death of a lucky relation, inherited an estate of about a thousand a year, at the age of eighteen. The people who had the care of him, as well as himself, looked up this as an immense fortune, deemed it necessary he should have a foreign education. As he was of the right religion for it, he was entered at an university at Douay, where (though an excellent seminary for learning of all kinds) they were unable either to put any thing new into his head, tho' vacant enough, or to beat out his former vulgar prejudices; even the love of wine he carried back with him, a vice

France

France and Italy seldom fails to cure our young men of. He was dragged thro' Paris before his return to England, but robbed them of nothing *there*. No sooner had he taken possession of his estate than he recollected he ought to have a mistress. This wretch put herself in his way, hit his fancy, and in one of his drunken fits, *she* and the rest of her sisters, who were of the same profession, contrived not only to get a priest to marry her to him, but to have a kind of settlement made out and signed by him. He heard all this the next day with a kind of astonishment, but knew no remedy, had no resource but his bottle, which he resorted to morning, noon, and night, and soon ended a life which shame, remorse, and the vicious turn, as well as bad temper of the wretch he had made his wife, rendered

rendered burdensome to him. In his lastest moments he could hardly endure the sight of her, declared to his nearest relation and heir, he wished he could cut her off with a shilling; that she was not satisfied with proving false to his bed, but had injured him every way. No sooner was the breath out of his body, than she flew away with one of her gallants, regardless of every consequence that could befall the manes of the man to whom she owed every thing valuable she possessed. Her husband's successor held her in the contempt she merited at his hands, and on looking into his papers, found his relation had never passed fines upon his estate, consequently had no power to make settlements; and he took from her the jointure her ill fated husband had given her, which her brutality to him left her

her totally unworthy of. In this situation, and with an old superannuated keeper, the infatuated Count found her, attached himself to her, as much as he could attach himself. She has ever since remained the premier; but *he* has a thousand mistresses. I have made a long digression, dwelt infinitely longer than the subject deserves, upon this wretch's story. I thought it necessary, in order to give you some idea of the man who makes so large a part in my narrative, and who for many years rendered unhappy the most amiable and best of women. Whenever his finances were low, he deigned to visit the Countess, constantly putting on an air of penitence, which wrought upon her easy friendly nature, and more than once deceived the Duchess of ———, for the sisters never separated

parated after the death of the Princess their mother. No sooner was his purse filled, than he pretended business, and flew to lavish the bounty of his indulgent wife on the base scandalous cause of all her misery. When their mourning was over, and they had enough composed their minds to be able to receive their family and friends, they went to the Hotel de —, at Paris; it belonged to the Duchess; he could not force his way in, and the dreadful accounts her Grace had of him from all hands *there*, made her very little solicitous of his company, as well as cautious how she encouraged him. At a masked ball she gave to some of the first people about the court, he crowded in some of this horrid woman's relations. A thing so infamous, she never could forgive, and determined no longer to



to keep any measures with him. The Countess felt sensibly so gross an affront, and totally withdrew her affections from a being too unworthy ever to have had any pretensions or claim to the smallest share in a heart he never understood the value of. From this time they enjoyed more quiet ; but happiness with such a situation was incompatible : every body endeavoured to amuse a melancholy they saw had already taken too deep hold on the mind of the poor Duchess, and from the delicacy of her constitution would, *they* feared, prove fatal to her. Their fears were, alas ! but too justly grounded. Within less than three months after their arrival at Paris, she died of a violent consumption, and left the Countess possessed of great wealth, but more misery. In the Duchess she lost a second parent,

her

her first and dearest friend; for the Count had, on every occasion, proved himself to *her* the opposite character. She could see him in no other light than that of a cruel executioner, who had robbed her of such a mother, and such a sister, as few could boast of. To avoid further persecution from a husband she could no longer love, she flew to that happy asylum she had much cause to regret the having left, and put herself under the protection of the Princess de —, who was superior of that house, and whose friendship for the Countess rendered her happy in the charge. *She* instantly set down, wrote such an account of the distressing situation the poor Countess was in, to the King, as must necessarily render all the Count's machinations to get her out of the convent abortive; believ-

ing, as it soon after happened, that he would endeavour by all means, whether fair or foul, to get the Countess and her fortune into his possession. On this disappointment, he gave himself up to riot and dissipation, which his charming *veuve* (as he called her) rather encouraged  $\equiv$  indifferent about his person, while she managed his purse. But let us leave a subject disgraceful to humanity, and return to the *glory*, the *honour* of it. The manes of the poor Duchesse (which had lain in the chapel belonging to the convent, from the time the Countess entered it) were interred according to her desire, with great privacy: ten thousand livres were given that evening to the poor of Paris. What the Countess suffered beggars description. Religion, the only resource of the wretched, supported her

under

under it, and has since rendered her the happiest of human race. She sees afflictions were necessary for her ; gratefully adores the all-wise Providence for his fatherly correction to her. Her whole life is spent in acts of beneficence and piety, free from ostentation or austerity. Some of the most cheerful hours I pass is with her : I have gained infinitely more instruction of every kind from her conversation, within the short space of time we have been acquainted, than in my whole life before. To a thorough knowledge of books she has added that of the world ; can read mankind, with as much facility as she can her grammar. With all this, she has the greatest pleasure in conversing with young people imaginable ; because she can inform them, and has a much higher gratification in conferring

ferring than receiving benefits. ✓ To know what she is, and to reflect on the severity of her lot, and how cruelly she was thrown away, is of itself sufficient to convince us, this is not the place of retribution. Madame, the superior, shews me very particular honours. I spend so much of my time at this house, that both Lord and Lady R—— have more than once expressed some dissatisfaction at it, for which I honestly assure you they have not the least cause. My religious principles are too strongly fixed, to allow a possibility of change; notwithstanding, I confess, was I ever unfortunate enough to lose my mother, I should be happy to spend some months in the year in this heavenly habitation, with you to accompany me, while you remain unmarried; not that I wish or endeavour

endeavour to persuade you (my dear Morvina) to renounce all thoughts of a state in which you may be happy ; because it can, at best, never have any charms for me. The only man I ever was wild enough to wish to marry, besides the narrowness of his fortune, turned out unworthy, and would, I doubt not, have been a second Count de ——. The man I ought in prudence to have married, and who I must ever esteem, though every way worthy, has never been able to force his way into my heart ; and you know my sentiments, therefore will not be surprized I should reject an establishment few women in England but would have jumped at. I must write to my mother by this night's mail. Our regular correspondence saves you, who hate writing, much trouble : but I forget,

you never think any thing a trouble to serve your friends. We go to the opera this evening : not the first entertainment *here*. The company is the best part of it : indeed they seem to think so themselves ; for they converse so much and so loud, you could hear little of the music, was it better worth attending to. The dancing I own I like, notwithstanding many of the English abuse it, more from their patriotic spirit, I believe, than the elegance of their taste in the art. You see, my dear Morvina, how reluctant I am to leave you ; I must fill my paper ; a mercy for you it will contain little more than that I am tenderly and truly

Your friend, &c.

My

My mother talks of Barege. Would we were to meet you there: Lord R— means to go next month.

D 4

L E T.



## L E T T E R XXVII.

I Hope, my dear Morvina, you have not been too elegant, too expensive in your mourning, for you must undoubtedly have concluded me dead and buried, from such a long and total silence. Lord R—— promised to take up his pen, but has not I find done it, which could I have imagined or devised, you would certainly have received a few lines from me, though I have for these three weeks past been dancing from place to place with a bride. A pretty way, you will say, of renouncing this wicked world and its vanities; but alas! there

there is no stability in human nature : and to add to the astonishment I see you seized with, I went at the intreaties of my dear coadjutrix, in part to represent her. One of her nearest relations and first favourites has taken unto him a wife, not distantly related to his Holiness, and high in his favour. She is already the ton here, and most deservedly so. To the most perfect symmetry of features, she has a countenance which adds grace to each particular feature, and lights up the whole ; a complexion that eclipses all power of paint, even at Versailles ; a figure which all admire, all talk of, but no one can describe : in short, others are beautiful, but the Countess de — is beauty : others are graceful, but she is grace. With all this, she has an understanding which renders her superior to

the vanity (though she shews strongly the laudable desire) of pleasing. Unconscious of the power of her charms, she gains the admiration of the men, without the envy of the women. If there is such a thing as uninterrupted happiness in the married state, this couple, I think, bid fairly for it. When I told you the Count was the favourite of my friend, I felt I had given you every idea of his mental qualifications; I cannot, however, pass over unheeded the outward man. His face is not beautiful, but extremely pleasing; great expression in his eyes, a benevolent open countenance, his figure elegant, rather tall, with an address that cannot be told, but which prejudices all the world in his favour. But to sum up all in few words, he is altogether a man of fashion. With  
great

great reluctance I must say on all sides, I left this lovely, loving pair in the country, not without many entreaties on their part, and promises on mine, to make them another visit before I leave this happy kingdom; the politeness and good humour of the people make it well worthy that appellation. Nor can I believe they are behind hand with us in friendship, or allow that a brutal ferocity is any mark of it. I would not be flattered on either my faults or my follies; but I should judge that person little my friend, who was ever inclined to turn his eyes towards the dark side of my character, to paint it to me in the most indelicate terms and tone of voice, and be apt to suspect it oftener proceeded from the pleasure of gratifying the malice of his own *heart*, than kindness.

towards ~~me~~. Lady R—— is so ill  
 again, I do not think we shall go to  
 Barege. She wishes, as is natural, to try  
 the effects of her native air; but she  
 must recover a slight fever and cold,  
 which now oppresses her, before she will  
 be able to undertake the journey. This  
 makes me less lament my mother's pre-  
 ferring our English Bath, as I could not  
 have let Lady R—— return alone to  
 England, were her deservings from me  
 much less than I must ever feel them.  
 Oh! my dear Morvina, wanting an af-  
 fectionate and grateful heart, what are  
 we? Alas! a thousand times lower than  
 any brute under the sun. But since that is  
 not the turn of either of us, thank heaven,  
 and they who, under it, gave us being,  
 let us change the subject. Our coterie  
 meet here this evening, and I will not  
 feel

seal my letter, in hopes of picking up something new; besides, the packet sails not till twelve to-morrow night, and I may finish this before I sleep.

I AM set to my paper again. Our party left us rather earlier this evening, on account of Lady R——'s indisposition, though I never knew her in better spirits: indeed we were all so. Whether it was that I had been in the country for such a length of time, or that the whole company exerted themselves peculiarly, I know not, but I never I think saw them so brilliant, nor felt myself so overpowered with sleep as at this moment, therefore I must defer all I have to say on their chapter till next mail. En attendant adieu, and believe me ever your friend and affectionate sister, &c.

L E T,

## L E T T E R XXVII.

My dear Sister,

JUST returned to life, after twelve hours found sleep (for sure such sleep is near akin to death) I sit down to give you an account of our last night's amusement. I will begin with naming the *dramatis personæ*. First then, behold the truly amiable Duchefs of M——, followed by Mrs. P——, the only new person; the rest you know by name at least. Her wit is more her own, and less forced upon you, than any person's I ever met with; her sentiments, her ideas just, clear, delicate, yet nervous, expressed

expressed in terms, and with such oratory a Cicero, a Demosthenes could only equal. Added to every other, I confess I had a national pleasure, nay pride in her, and could not help thinking she made ample amends for the ship-loads of, — I will not say what, you so lavishly exported here from England; a very impolitic mode of acting, begging the wise legislature's pardon, since they constantly return freighted with the follies of every other country through which they pass, without leaving one of their own in exchange. Mrs. P — is the only Englishwoman, except ourselves, in the Duchesse of M — 's coterie. Mr. W —, I am told (and can readily believe) made no small figure in it; but he had left Paris before our arrival. Cards, conversation, and the table, see the night out.



out. Before supper the conversation turns on variety of subjects, at once improving and delightful. But the instant you sit down to table, *vive la bagatelle* is the word; and to give you an idea of the brilliant sallies of wit, unallayed by satire, humour unsullied by vulgarisms, that flew about last night, is I own beyond me. Suffice it to say, you cannot figure to your imagination any thing beyond it. The natural politeness and constant attention that French men shew to women in general, is certainly pleasing; and let John Bull say what he will, convinced am I, they both admire, love, and esteem the rational and worthy part of the sex; have the highest honor for their opinions, and glory in their abilities; a sentiment so diametrically opposite to John's own, who holds sense in  
petticoats

petticoats a dangerous enemy to the state, which ought to be held in the most abject slavery, lest they should dethrone their mighty lords and masters, eclipse their senatorial wisdom, which harangues whole days in each house against power, tyranny, and oppression, yet never fail making those feel the weight of it, who are unfortunate enough to breathe under their unhospitable roof. Infer not from this I am in love with a Frenchman; or if I were capable of a second passion, I should prefer any person to Bonaria. I never told you he has been *here* these two months, the same respectful, assiduous friend as ever, in which light I most extremely love and value him, and am sorry some pecuniary affairs will call him to England before we can go. Lady R—— continues so extremely

tremely weak, I begin to fear she will never get there alive, it is not possible to say how sincerely I dread the loss of her; first, I love her; she merits that love, by every tender parental concern for my welfare, as well as partiality to my person; and I seriously think, with Doctor Taylor (however idly we used to laugh at poor Mademoiselle about it) that it is infinitely pleasanter to be under government than absolutely your own mistress. There is no one thing I ought to do she does not promote, and wish I should be amused with. I am relieved from the plague of thinking whole hours what is right or wrong in the world's eye; for *that* will not overlook an imprudence that has perhaps no essential ill in it, and which might appear more than allowable in the eyes of unexperienced

enced youth. Her Ladyship has no  
 of the imminent danger she is in.  
 d R—— fees it with the deepest sor-  
 , yet forces his spirits for fear of  
 ipping her's: a melancholy situation  
 so tender and sensible a heart as that  
 ny dear Morvina, your ever unalter-  
 friend, &c.

I. E. T.

## L E T T E R XXIX.

I Should not have suffered a whole week to elapse without thanking my dear Morvina for her very kind letter, had not the alarming state of Lady R——'s health rendered it absolutely impossible for me to leave her ten minutes at a time: but thank heaven it has ended happy beyond our most sanguine expectations, by the bursting of an abscess, which had formed on her lungs, and caused all her complaints. The bag and all came up. The physicians agree she will be as perfectly well as ever she was, as there is not the least probability of its gathering again; but they hold it advisable

visible we should go into the country to-  
 morrow to enjoy fresh air and quiet: be-  
 sides, her Ladyship is to drink [goat's  
 whey; that is, *they* think, preferable to  
 asses-milk: partial as you know I am  
 to asses, I am obliged to give them up.  
 My dear heavenly friend has lent us the  
 house in the country which belonged to  
 the poor Princess her mother; so here we  
 shall find every thing needful for sick and  
 well: and Lord R—— has invited Bo-  
 naria to stay with us as long as his affairs  
 will allow him; therefore I have an idea  
 we shall all come over together at last.  
 I should (to own my inmost thoughts to  
 you) have been as well pleased this invi-  
 tation had not been accepted. I fancy  
 he owes it to poor Lady R——, who ad-  
 mires him much, and wishes I would do  
 so too. Her partiality to me could not  
 rise

rise higher had I been born her nearest relation, in what she thought, and indeed what we all thought her dying moments; she intreated her lord would give me her jewels, and every other valuable she possessed, and make me heir to her estate and houses after him, assuring him at the same time, had fate been so cruel as to allot her to survive him, I should have been sure of them. I go this evening to the Duchess of M——'s, to take leave for some little time of our friends, which I should do with infinite reluctance was I going from them on any other occasion. But surely no gratification can exceed that of making others happy, and repaying, by every little service in our power, the obligations of affection, &c. we owe them. When I get into the country, I have a pretty story or

two of some nuns of my acquaintance I shall give you. We shall be very near neighbours to the new married pair, who I hear are so enamoured with the country, or each other, they do not intend returning to Paris some time yet. What my friend has told me of the Count de —— (and her judgment is too good and stable to be led away by whim or partiality) makes me think the Countess, with all the beauty she has, and all the merit that is generally allowed her, fortunate in meeting with such a man. Never (I intreat you, my dear Morvina) name ——— more: trust me, he is not worth it: that I have not the least tendre left towards him, believe me. I can see, or hear of him with the most perfect indifference; but feel ashamed I ever felt more for him, consequently blush at your mentioning him;



him; it seems an upbraiding me of my former weakness, into which I never can relapse, I give you my serious word. I ever was, and hope I ever shall be, tardy in crediting disadvantageous reports of those I love; but when they are clearly true, nothing left to hang a doubt upon, my opinion changed from conviction, no power on earth can alter it. Yet all the malice I bear him is to forgive him. May he live and deal with others better. What a wretch the Chevalier B—— is to keep Lady B—— in England merely to plague her, and all who love her, for he is never with her; at least lives most of his time with that low miserable woman he keeps, or rather starves, for I much doubt he can find in his heart to give her anything above a beef-steak once a week. Adieu my dear, believe me ever yours, &c.

L E T.

## L E T T E R    X X X.

FIRST, my dear Morvina, I must tell you we arrived safe, well, and in spirits, at this beautiful castle, which I have already in part described to you, and shall defer what more I may have to say of it to a future letter, that I may have room to tell you in this what a delightful evening I spent at Madame the Duchess of M——'s. Lady R—— stayed at home, in order to save her spirits for her journey of this day; and the Duchess of C—— did me the honour to call on me, and carry me to the Duchess of M——'s. There was a sister of the Princess of —, consort of the Chevalier S——,

L. II.

E

who

who had been some time of the Duchefs's coterie, but never in Paris since I have been here, therefore quite new to me. She is very handsome, sensible, and pleasing; but nothing, they tell me, if compared to her sister. We got together as if by instinct, commenced a conversation which seemed grateful to both. She is most lavish in her praises of *him*. To every great and good quality, she says, he joins such a disposition as hardly can be equalled; that on earth there never existed a more happy being than the Princess; that her heart tenderly loves him, whom her judgment must admire, nay, adore. She wished me much to see them; but not more than I wish it myself; but with Lord and Lady R—— you know that cannot be, so strangely bigoted are they to party, and it is too far

far for me to attempt going without them; otherwise I have much cause to believe I should not be ill received at their C——, which I hear is extremely elegant, though confined more than he wishes it; for he may truly say, with our Elizabeth, he has the heart of a King, &c. How necessary an heart is I know not; but sure I am, *her spirit* is absolutely necessary to govern the English, whose levelling, turbulent spirits so often carry them out of themselves. I pity our present King exceedingly, to be perpetually worried by your city bulls and bears. We had a new man introduced last night; a cousin of ours, the Duke de B——. Nothing can be more strikingly polite or parvenant than his manners; his person graceful and all you could wish; he seems to have good

parts, great quickness, says lively things in abundance without knowing it: in short, *his* is *sheer* wit. Madame de —— would have introduced him to me, but I declined it till our return, if we should make any long sejour at Paris; then I shall be much pleased, I dare say, with his acquaintance.

Dinner called me from you; but I am now returned to tell you we all eat like city aldermen and their wives on a lord mayor's day; a pretty delicate simile that, it is well I thought not of it before dinner, it might have destroyed my appetite, for you know the aversion I have to grease. Bonaria I forgot; he eat little, and looks wretchedly. Vanity apart, I dread his relapsing into his former passion; but I will think with Seneca,

neca, "those men are void of reason who  
 " make distant evils appear present by  
 reflection," and flatter myself I shall ne-  
 ver lose the friend I love and value in  
 the lover I cannot like, consequently  
 must avoid. Did I ever tell you Lady  
 R—— since her recovery has made me  
 a present of a very fine pair of brilliant  
 ear-rings, and a diamond necklace, which  
 pulls to pieces and makes into an hun-  
 dred different things. Lord R—— left  
 yesterday morning on my toilet a very  
 pretty mignon gold fillagree pocket-  
 book; its contents a thousand pound  
 bank note, to pay my Paris bills. The  
 manner in which they both bestow their  
 favours, valuable as they really are, en-  
 hances them greatly to a noble, a gene-  
 rous mind; for there is such a thing as  
 knocking you down, crushing you with

favours. The Count and Countess din  
with us to morrow, after the Englis  
fashion; for supper is the great mea  
*here*, and every where the goût of you  
affectionate sister and unalterable friend

I. E.

## L E T T E R XXXI.

I Am more than ever charmed with the new married pair ; neither can I determine in my own mind which to give the preference to. We spend the whole day with them to-morrow ; go a hunting in a forest near their chateau. You know the mode of hunting in this country, therefore will not be astonished *we* join in *it*. Now for the story of one of my poor nuns. She is descended from one of the younger branches of the N—— family, was sent over *here*, at the age of seven years, to be educated. She gave very early marks of a good heart and temper ; her parts were what may be



justly termed shining. She was an only daughter ; no wonder her mother wished for her return. When she was sixteen years old, her father and mother came to fetch her over to England ; but were desirous she should see the French court, and be introduced into the grande monde before she left Paris. She was generally admired : her person is of that kind which often pleases more than beauty ; the truly engageante. She had many adorers amongst the first young men of the court ; but one only had power to make the smallest impression on the heart of Orinda (for so she was called.) This happy (or more properly speaking ill fated) young man was the Count de T——, whose mother was left guardian to him by the most affectionate father, but *too* indulgent husband ;  
whence

whence this poor young man became almost totally dependant on her, tho' born to expect a large fortune. The very scanty pittance she allowed him from the death of the Count his father, left him little to hope from her generosity ; however, he could hardly suppose her so lost to all feelings of humanity, as to oppose a connection on which his future happiness depended, and where there could be no sort of objection ; therefore, without consulting her, attached himself to the amiable Orinda, whose heart was too susceptible of the tender *passion*, not to render justice to *his*. Her soul was delicate as it was tender, and she had many struggles between modesty, duty, and affection, ere she could bring herself to make the discovery she felt she owed her mother, before her passion was irremedi-

ably rooted. Madame H—— told her husband ; each received it as they ought, and begged the Count would not delay acquainting the Countess his mother with the whole affair ; since without her sanction they could not, in honour to themselves and their daughter, admit of his visits : with *that*, they would do all the Countess could or would desire towards the happy establishment of her Ladyship's son and their daughter, whose blood and merit they flattered themselves were inferior to none. The Count flew on the wing of passion, not doubting the Countess would give her consent to his marriage with Mademoiselle H——, though he much feared she would act rather shabbily in regard to settlements, &c. but as that would one day be in his power to amend, it gave him little pain.

But

But what was his surprize, when the moment he let the Countess into the cause of his visit, she burst into a rage that exceeds all description, bid him leave her that instant, never enter the hotel du T—— while her eyes were open. The misery he sustained, the dilemma this plunged him into was insupportable: he thought he ought, and wished to return to the mistress of his heart; but how was it possible for him to tell her the result of his visit; in what light could he put the Countess's horrid behaviour; what terms could he find to express the substance of what she said, that would not sound in the highest degree offensive to a less delicate ear than Orinda's, or Madame H——'s: in short, he could not hope, that however little share pecuniary views had in the consent he had the

honour to obtain from Mr. and Madame H——, they could be brought to overlook such an outrageous affront to their daughter, to themselves, &c. or that the smallest gleam of happiness remained for him on earth. His mother's inflexibility of temper he was too well acquainted with, to hope a change. Mr. H——'s spirit would never pardon such an insult, offered to what he deemed the best blood in England, consequently never suffer his daughter to see him more; perhaps marry her to the Duke of D——, a young Englishman of great fortune, as well as rank, who had payed his doudours there some time. Agitated with every apprehension, every horror, every agony the human heart is capable of feeling, he flew home, wrote a short but pathetic and tender epistle to Mrs. H——, entreated

entreated she would comfort the divine Orinda under the sorrows he feared his ill-starred destiny would cause her; but found it was impossible for him to live without her, as it was for him to desire she should form a connection so unworthy of her. His latest breath, he said, should be offered in oraisons for her welfare, her happiness here, and that they might meet in those regions, where bliss, &c. did not depend upon the capricious will of mortals. His faithful Piere, who had lived in his service almost from his childhood, carried this melancholy epistle; on his return he had the mortification to find his master fled, and fled he knew not whither: all he could learn from the rest of the servants was, that a few minutes after *he* had dispatched *him*, he went out on foot, with his sword on, and  
a brace

a brace of pistols; after he had walked some paces from the door, he turned back again, and ordered his Swiss to tell Piere to wait his return in his chamber; but alas! that was impossible, and Piere, for the first time in his life, ventured to disobey the master he loved more than life. He and the honest Swiss run from street to street, from house to house, but not a word of intelligence could they gain relative to the Count. On their return home they found a messenger from him, who had waited some time with a note for Piere, and a letter which he was to carry directly to Madame H——'s, and bring her answer as early as he could in the morning to the Count at Argenteuil. Piere rejoiced to find his master still lived, went to Mr. H——'s in such spirits as revived Madame H——'s, which

which had sunk into the very lowest state of dejection, and remained in it from the moment she had read the Count's first letter, until the entrance of Pierre, whose countenance she deemed prophetic of some good ; but on opening her letter, she found it much less so than she had flattered herself ; though to know he was alive, was in her then situation, infinite happiness ; and she could not help extolling her own prudence, in not having disclosed the cause of her discontent even to Mr. H——. She feared it might alarm his pride, and awaken a resentment, which must end fatally to either him or the Count. To poor Orinda she feared it would have been instant death, or what is a thousand times more dreadful, loss of reason ; for she could construe his first letter no otherwise than that he meant



to put an end to his existence, ere the messenger returned. The last was more explicit, and told her he had that morning embraced a religious life, renounced the world, its miseries, its vanities, and removed from the eyes of the amiable and lovely Orinda, an object which could no longer give her ideas of happiness, and who *he* determined should never remain in the world, either as an obstacle to her pleasure or her fortune. What was odd enough, he entered into the very house which once concealed the so much famed Abelard from worldly contempt, and rendered him so amply worthy of eternal happiness. Mrs. H—— saw no reason to conceal the contents of this letter, or the cause of it, from either her husband or daughter, but deemed it proper to consult *him* how, when, and where they should

should break it to poor Orinda, sensibly feeling the shock it would give her, who was wholly unacquainted with all that had passed between him and the Countess his mother, whose heart was (if it had ever been otherwise) grown callous to every feeling of humanity. The most respectful though passionate letter from her son, could not force its way into it, and when she heard he had taken holy orders, she said he could not have done better; he was more calculated for a cloister than a court; that his warm enthusiastic spirit would work him up to the highest degree of imaginary felicity where he then was, which in the world lay him liable to much misery, by rendering him the dupe of every new face he saw; and since it is an allowed maxim, that violent passions are the least durable, said she, I think

think the girl is bound to pray for me.—  
 But enough of this brute ; we have too many examples walking perpetually before our eyes, to need paint them. Mr. and Mrs. H—— agreed it was best to stay at home that evening, and break the affair to Orinda, since it was impossible, if she went out, she could escape hearing of it. Nothing ever made more eclat. The Count, admired and beloved as he was by the whole court, taking so uncommon a step, caused not only universal surprize, but sorrow ; very few knew the real cause of it, and every one assigned that which struck *his* ideas as probable. Mrs. H—— went into Orinda's apartment, in order to bring her into her father's library, and found her bathed in tears. My dear child, said *she*, what can cause this distress ? Oh, my dear madam, replied

replied Orinda, you know it but too well. Pardon my weakness, and not only permit me, but animate me to follow the example the most worthy, the best of men has set me; suffer me, instead of returning to England, to return to St. Cyr, and take the veil. To see me wretched, I well know, will render both you and my father completely so: to know I am not only easy, but happy, for that I make no doubt I shall be, as soon as the force of my sorrows are enough abated to leave me leisure to reflect I am capable of infinitely greater, more exalted felicity than this gew-gaw world can give, and in the road to obtain that happiness I was born for: my dear madam, continued she, use your influence with my father to obtain this wished-for boon, the only one I shall ever crave, and the only means of  
rendering

rendering life supportable. I may see you often, and you will, I hope and believe, have cause from the blessed change it will work in me, to rejoice in the suffering of this present moment. Mr. H——'s fears suggested to his imagination every thing dreadful, and he could no longer wait Mrs. H——'s return, but flew up stairs to Orinda's apartment. She instantly fell on her knees, and earnestly intreated he would let her return to the convent. He answered but with tears, and listened with patience and attention to all her mother and she could say ; knowing of how little use it would be to attempt to dissuade her from the only eligible plan which presented itself to the wretched Orinda's ideas at that time. He consented she should go to St. Cyr, upon giving him her most sacred

cred and solemn word she would not profess for the space of two whole years, from the day she entered the convent, and that her mother and himself should be present (please God they lived so long) at the ceremony : that they should see her often in the interim, offer their arguments against her taking the veil, and know her unbiassed sentiments from time to time. If at the end of that period she continued steady to her purpose, *he* and her mother would resign her to the will of Heaven ; that dispassionate cool reflection might shew her the situation which then appeared insupportable to her, in a very different light ; and it was more than probable she would feel uneasy hankerings after the world she had unwarily renounced, when it was too late. She assured him that never could happen ;  
and

and that she was too sensible of the tender indulgence he and her mother shewed on an occasion most parents would have answered with upbraidings, and made use of the authority they undoubtedly had over a child to force her into the world, regardless of the wretchedness she had to sustain in it, to wish for more than they thought fit to grant. To see them must add to her happiness in every station; they might venture to depend on her dealing with the ingenuity they required, and had every right to expect from her. Should she feel any wish to return into the world, at the expiration of the time allowed, she would not conceal it from them, or hesitate a moment about leaving the convent, to which she hoped they would suffer her to retire immediately; her brother's re-  
turn

turn would more than make up to them  
 the loss of a daughter, whose folly had  
 rendered her a plague both to them and  
 herself. Here tears, sighs, and lamen-  
 tations of every sort stopped all inter-  
 course of words between them for some  
 time. At length Mr. H—— said she  
 should go early the next day, if her mo-  
 ther approved of it, who answered in  
 the affirmative. They then separated  
 till supper, which was ordered in Mrs.  
 H——'s dressing-room, on Orinda's ac-  
 count, and no servants to wait, save an  
 old groom of the chamber, who had  
 been bred up in the Duke, Mr. H——'s  
 grandfather's family, and who adored  
 every branch of it. His heart was too  
 full not to find vent at his eyes, and he  
 was barely able to see, for tears, to bring  
 what they called for. Supper was soon  
 over,



over; and as soon after as possible they all retired to their apartments, with little prospect of rest. Orinda would have been much more composed, had she not been witness to the sorrows of those who were most deservedly dear to her, and alas! the unhappy cause of them all. But to shorten my narrative, behold them arrived at St. Cyr by dawn of day; the parting, though but for a few days, dreadful beyond imagination. You will wonder, so near as they were, they should not see Orinda every day; but as young Mr. H ——— was then on his return from Rome, Mr. and Mrs. H ——— determined to go to meet him, believing it would a little amuse their thoughts, and be much better that he should know the melancholy event before he got to Paris. They set out that day, with very  
few

few attendants, none who were to approach them, but the old man I have already mentioned, and Mrs. H——'s woman. They met their son the third day, who saw some heavy weight oppressed their minds, before they related the cause of it. *He* bore a large part in all they suffered, yet thought it much easier to remove melancholy by diverting, than indulging of it, and persuaded them to return with him to Rome, where a certain marriage was soon to be celebrated, of which they would not be indifferent spectators. They took his counsel, and got to Rome just time enough to join ——'s train; they stayed to pay their devoirs, were well received at his —— court, having very particular honours shewn them. Orinda's story had reached his Holiness before

Mr. H— left Rome ; *he* took much pains to reconcile Mr. and Mrs. H— to the will of providence, as his Holiness called it. The effect it had on *them* is what *you* and *I* can ill conceive. On their return to Paris, they went to St. Cyr with pleasanter aspects than when they left it ; said infinitely less than poor sister Louise (for so she was called) expected. As she knew nothing of the conversations they had had with his Holiness, she attributed this happy change to the joy they had in her brother. *He* indeed wished to dissuade her from a plan that to *him* wore the appearance of a distempered brain ; but he found in *her*, it had its source in cool, well digested reflection, therefore gave up the point. He not only felt for his sister, but the poor Count, who had been one of his most intimate,

intimate, earliest friends. He went to Argenteuil, implored (but in vain) that he might see him. The Count had entered into that severe order which prohibits its votaries all intercourse with mortals, save once a year ; however, with leave of his superior, he wrote young Mr. H— the following note.

Attempt not, my friend, the brother of the happy Louise, to disturb that repose the world has neither power to give or take away. Trust me, one single moment's tranquillity I now experience, overpays the loss of a thousand such worlds as that we have quitted. Make no further effort to rob your sister of eternal glory ; let her run the race that is set before her, &c. To believers the way is pleasant, and the end everlasting

peace. May the light so shine on you all, as to direct your feet into its paths. Thus prays your friend, Jerome.

The above, with what the Pope had before said, wrought so thorough a change in the minds of Mr. and Mrs. H——, as to make them enough satisfied with the part Orinda had chosen, to renounce all thoughts, all endeavours, for the future, to work a change in her inclination. Notwithstanding they visited her frequently, they had the pleasure to find her more and more satisfied with her situation each time they saw her; she was determined however not to take the veil till the expiration of the time allotted by Mr. H——, for fear it might ever be imagined she hid passion under the mask of religion, and retired more from a dis-

gust to the world, caused by the disappointment she had met with, than a right and serious turn of mind. It was *that* stroke of fortune, she at first deemed singularly severe, made her look into herself; she has often owned to me; but to the same benign providence that mercifully threw that bitter drop into her cup, to awaken in her a true sense of religion, she owed her perseverance in it, and the perfect tranquillity she then enjoyed. To return to Mrs. H——, her husband and son; they were pretty well reconciled to their lot; were obliged to go to England, to take possession of a very good estate left to Mrs. H—— by a brother. They went to take leave of their dear Orinda, which caused some tears, some tender sensations on all sides; but that grief was transitory; they cor-

responded regularly. Mr. and Mrs. H—— did not return to France till the expiration of the two years. They could not forbear wishing and endeavouring to prevent their daughter taking the veil; but vain were all their efforts; the universe could not have tempted her to renounce her present happiness, much less *that* she saw before her; therefore, ten days after their arrival at Paris, she was professed, with all possible form and ceremony; is now the most agreeable, cheerful, contented being under the sun, though this is the third year, since she professed. The Count she hears of but once a year. The anniversary of the day he entered the cloister, he writes a very short letter, exhorting sister Louisa ever to bear in mind the peculiar mercies of providence, in rescuing them both from  
the

the snares of Satan, the perils and vanities of this wicked world, by vouchsafing to call them (though through the thorny paths of worldly delights) to join his elect saints, blessed for ever. When she begun her story, I never doubted the Count with his sword and brace of pistols had sallied out to shoot himself, or (if his fire failed) fall on his sword, a l'Angloise. How shocking is it to hear as we perpetually do in England, of those dreadful catastrophes. What a blessing would it be, my dear Morvina, if there were receptacles for the wretched of both sexes, such respectable asylums as religious houses, and I confess I see nothing in them repugnant to our way of worship, which I must ever hold preferable to any other I have yet seen. The legislature might limit these houses to a certain



number, &c. but how idle am I to stray so far out of my province, as to pretend to give laws to nations. You know Mr. H——, the son, is married to one of the richest heiresses in England, and as thoroughly unhappy as any person in it, and that is a bold word, let me tell you. With my story I shall finish my letter when I have desired I may hear from you very soon. Lady R—— finds herself so well recovered as to talk of returning to Paris shortly. Adieu! God bless you; yours most sincerely and affectionately.

L E T-

## L E T T E R XXXII.

WE spent the pleasantest day with the Count and Countess that you can imagine, my dear Morvina; came home so late last night, I am but just up, tho' the clock has struck one; but Lady R—— is too well bred to desire I should rise to breakfast, or alter my method of living, because I am in her house. She says what my father used to tell us very early, that the obligation is from you to your company, not from them to you; that you are indispensibly bound by the laws of honour, hospitality, and good manners, to render your house as

agreeable and easy as possible to all your friends and acquaintance. Indeed she practices, as *he* did, what she preaches. But to give you some account of our entertainment : we drove through most delightful avenues, the whole way from this place to the Count's, which is a magnificent old castle, said to be built by the famous constable Montmorency, by way of villa, when he chose to retire, and descended to the present possessor in right of a female of that *house* marrying into his. Be that as it may, it is a charming place, and they who own it are worthy of every thing. The gallery and saloon are superb ; some good paintings ; the furniture, tho' old, still has an air of magnificence. An aunt of the Count's is now with them ; came to receive the Countess ; and is one of the most agreeable

able women I ever met with ; has all the dignity of the last age, with the chearfulness of this ; the Countess is so charmed with her, she dreads to hear of her going to Paris, where she means, and indeed must go, long before them, as she belongs to the court, to which she is still an ornament, and where she has lived since the age of eighteen, with an unblemished reputation, notwithstanding the extraordinary share of beauty, as well as wit, she possessed must have excited much envy in the women, as well as love in the men. This proves (what I have often advanced) it depends upon ourselves to baffle slander, by a proper conduct, arising from a droiture of heart : for nothing is more certain, than that truth, sooner or later, will force conviction, and silence calumny, though decorated with the specious pretence of in-

nocence and love of virtue. So much for Madame de Boneaur. When we arrived at the Count's, *he* and the Countess met us at the door of the saloon, whence we were led into an anti-chamber, from thence into the Countess's dressing-room, which is indeed truly elegant, hung with immense fine tapestry, though not in the modern stile; the chairs, sofas, window, and door curtains, of the most superb gold stuff; a very fine chimney-piece of statuary marble, supported by Cupid on one side, and Hymen on the other, very finely carved, as is the upper part of the chimney-piece, and inlaid with the finest porphyry. The floor is cedar, inlaid with ivory, small Mosaic: within this is a small library which beats all description; it is wainscotted and floored with cedar,

the

the wainscot and bookcases finely carved, the pannels small ; in the middle of each hung a drawing of some great genius, in the dress of the time and country he lived : amongst them were Shakespear, Milton, &c. They have carried us down to the reign of queen Anne, which may justly be termed the golden age of letters in England. There was besides a thousand curious things, were I to mention, would fill a pretty large volume. But I cannot pass over in silence a strong box, too beautiful to forbear wishing for. It is of the finest old gold japan ; lock, hinges, handles, and many other ornaments, gold ; and *such a key*, as would require some strength to carry. After regaling ourselves with ice, fruit, lemonaid, orgeat, &c. we sallied out in open carriages of various sorts, to this extraordinary

ordinary hunt; the ridiculousness of which is beyond all conception, as well as the noise the whole company made. All the accounts Lord R—— has given us, of *une partie de la chasse*, *outré* as they appeared to us, do not I assure you come up to it. A short time gave us enough of it, and I was heartily glad to return to the beautiful chateau I could *never* tire of. So soon as we had recommoded our drefs, dinner was served up; the first course of fifteen covers, all soups, except some plates of *bouilli* put in between the tureens; the second course, the same number of dishes, consisted of fish and savory pies of every sort; the third course was *roties* of all kinds, and *entremets* made up in all thirty covers; then came the desert, served up on the most beautiful Chantilly ware you ever beheld,

beheld, that was made up of fruit, cakes, and ice, of every different sort imaginable.—But no more of eating; I have tired you to death already with it. So soon as it was over, we went into the drawing-room, which is very fine indeed, forty feet by five-and-thirty, by twenty; the ceiling finely painted; the story Mars and Rhea; the hanging and whole furniture of the room is white satin, embroidered with silks; the story of the hanging is Pastor-Fido; the curtains I did not notice, but believe they are only natural flowers, &c. Coffee over, we went into the gallery, where was music, cards, &c. After that, home. Lady R—— was not allowed to be out late at nights, therefore would not stay supper: she would have had me stay, but you may be sure I would not purchase



purchase pleasure at the expence of gratitude, nay, every generous sentiment. The Count, Countess, and Madame de Boneaur, will come to us before we leave this charming retreat, which I believe ten days will bring about. Should Lady R—— (as I believe and hope) be well enough before we quit Paris for me to leave her a few days, I mean to spend them at the convent with my estimable friend, and doubt not I shall be able to tell you when we meet, they were the most satisfactory and pleasant of any I have passed since we left England; tho' I have had little cause to complain of time hanging heavily on my hands. Sanchonia has this instant told me —— is at Paris; but since he cannot get into our fet, at least, while we stay, it is of little consequence to me, unless Lord R—— should

should hear he is *there*, and take it into his head to be wonderfully civil to him, on account of his connection to our family. I have charged Sanchonia not to mention his being at Paris for her life, therefore I think it is hardly probable Lord R—— will ever hear of him. One very great happiness of this country is, you are not liable to meet with people you do not like, or visit them as you do in London. Our visiting people's doors for ever, is the joke of all the world; and well it may; so inconsistent is it with that character of plain honesty, friendship, &c. we assume, and vainly affect. To-morrow will, I hope, bring me a letter from my dear Morvina, whose conversation is at all times and places necessary towards making up the happiness of her affectionate sister.

My

My mother seems to wish me in England. The desire I have to see her and you, makes *me* think of it with pleasure.

L E T.

## L E T T E R XXXIII.

THE Count and Countess have this moment left us ; but not without making me promise to spend some time with them next summer, if I come to this country, which they both hope and believe I will, I seem so truly pleased with it. That I am so is certain, and shall always prefer Paris to London, &c. &c. The Count and Countess are extremely musical ; he excels on the German flute, she on the piano forte ; they both sing in the Italian taste ; play no other music : indeed the French music is horrid, tho' we heard it in the highest perfection from

Madame

Madame de Boneaur; she sung us several French songs, and played upon the clavicorde: I played upon one of the finest harpsichords I ever touched, that belongs to my friend, who plays divinely. I may make use of that epithet, since she now plays and sings church music only. To-morrow we go to Paris, to the great discontent of Bonaria, tho' he has a general invitation to the hotel de R——. I have told him —— is at Paris, as well as my reasons for wishing it should be a secret from Lord R——, which is sure more than he had a right to expect: but with an extraordinary good understanding, an uncommon share of goodness, he has absurdities; but alas! my dear Morvina, who is exempt from follies? It is enough I hope to be free from faults. Lord R——  
 stays

stays but ten days at Paris. I shall write you a long letter from thence, and but one I believe. I shall have much to employ me for that short time, you will readily believe. Lord R—— is impatient to get into England. Two or three of his boroughs are vacant, and he has not determined who to offer them to; neither will he, till he has had an audience; for he holds our English law, that kings can do no wrong, most religiously true, notwithstanding his love of liberty. This sounds enigmatical, I confess; but to explain it in as few words as possible, he says, that since *our Henry the Seventh* threw the balance of power into the hands of the Commons, it is their fault when any administration encroaches upon the liberties of the people, or rather the fault of the people for choosing representatives

tentatives ignorant of the laws of their country, who have no property of their own in it to guard, at least so trifling a property, that it is in the power of every minister to buy them. For great trading towns, he allows one of their members should be a merchant of property, with a thorough knowledge of trade; but the rest ought to be chosen out of people of family, landed property, and consequence in their respective counties; not from the banks of the Ohio, &c. and that the qualification ought to be encreased as the value of money sinks; and considering the difference from the time that act first took place with the present times, it should be doubled at least. I agree with him entirely, but much fear we shall not meet with enow of our opinion to render it

ef-

effectual. However, I desire you will suffer the power of your charms to influence the squires against the general election, and not think I am run politically mad, because a kind of national, patriotic spirit will now and then buoy up in spite of me. The disagreeable situation our friend Miss ——'s good heart and friendly disposition makes her submit to, grieves me exceedingly. She is too romantic in her ideas of friendship: her life should not fall a sacrifice to it. To expect delicacy and sentiment should awaken the smallest spark of virtue, of gratitude, in the heart of a tyrannic profligate, is to live in the clouds, and expect miracles to be wrought in our favour. I pity his wife; but as, thank heaven, I am not wedded to the brute, I never will subject myself to his horrid temper and ca-



price. He left France but a very short time before we came *here*; gained the appellation of le Count de Belle Humeur, which I wonder at, since spite of his hypocrisy, I think the rancour of his heart appears in his countenance, with a self-sufficiency that is intolerably disgusting. But it is the turn of the family; for he has in a convent in Paris the very counterpart of him. Should she in some whim (for she has a thousand) take the veil, some man will have a blessed escape; for she is not ill looking, and will have an immense fortune, therefore in all probability be married, should she return into the world. Give my sincere love to Miss ———; tell her she has been too long lost to her friends, her family, and the world; that I earnestly pray I may find her returned to them  
all,

all, on my arrival in England. I have tired your patience, my dear Morvina, large as your portion of that virtue is, not to wear it out ; I will only entreat you to love and believe me ever your friend.

This moment Lady R—— tells me we are to remain a fortnight or three weeks longer in this dear town ; Lord R—— finding by letters, an express to our ambassador brought him, the elections do not come on so soon as he imagined ; and willing to indulge me, has put off his journey till the latter end of the month. Adieu, till the next courier.

## L E T T E R XXXIV.

My dear Morvina,

Paris.

THE splendor of this metropolis on every approach to it is amazing; its beauty wonderful. The public shews astonishingly great. Those we have had on a late marriage were indeed superb : but you had so particular, and withal so just an account of it in the public papers, it would be absurd to say more, than that all you read was literally true. The retirement of one of the Mesdames does not make less noise : nobody can account for it ; otherwise than that *she* quitted this world from a call to a better. She had always great good qualities,

ties, therefore surely does not need the severe penance ~~she~~ exercises over herself; but of that ~~she~~ must be the best judge. We were at Court last night; met all our French, and some of our English acquaintance *there*. I am much pleased with the ease of the French court: it is delightful: yet whether from prejudice, or what I cannot say, but in my opinion it wants the grandeur of ours. Amongst the rest of our acquaintance was Lord C——, and his cousin D——. They came up to us as soon as they could, for there was a mighty crowd. Lord R——, as I feared he would, asked them to dinner, à la mode des Angloise, as this day. Luckily they were engaged, and to-morrow I go to my dear coadjutress early in the morning, and stay with her ~~two~~ or three

nights. What a fortunate event. I  
 have been called from you to a visitor  
 no body knew. Who could it be? You  
 will wonder; and will wonder still more  
 when I tell you it was Lady B——.  
 The wise servants, who could not re-  
 member her name, were a Swiss porter  
 and an Italian groom of the chamber,  
 whom Lord R—— hired with the hotel,  
 and will leave in it. I breakfast with *her*  
 to-morrow at peep of day; for she rises  
 you know with the lark, I carry her  
 along with me to the convent, and intro-  
 duce her to my friend. Lord R—— is  
 in a most violent fufs, that I will not  
 stay to dine with my countrymen. Lady  
 R——, who has infinite quickness,  
 thinks it to the full as well as it is. I  
 shall leave them to dispute it out. *He*  
 is too well-bred to wrangle with a lady,  
 and

and too good a husband to quarrel with his wife. Notwithstanding I love him extremely as an uncle, I would not be his wife for the universe ; nor any man's wife ; such repugnance do I feel to be controuled by a being who professes himself your slave, and dances attendance until he has you in his power. Secure of *that, be* from the suppliant plays the haughty lord ; and if you feel it, cries your temper is insupportable, immediately looks out for some femme comode, on whom he lavishes his fortune, regardless of your sufferings. This may not always be the case ; but it so frequently happens, I am amazed any woman of condition will marry without a very good pin-money. I know the men in general cry out violently against this ; say it is declaring war before hand. Let

them not deserve it, and I will venture to answer they will never feel the bad effects of it. The cruel lot of the charming woman who has just left me, and of the other I am going to in the morning, has put me out of humour with the whole race of mankind. Good night: I shall now have more than usual amusement for you, and will write constantly from this place. Adieu ma chere, je vous baise la main.

L E T.

## L E T T E R XXXV.

My dear Morvina,

Paris, from the Countess's Asylum.

Lady B—— did not accompany me yesterday to this sweet asylum, but I have been too well entertained to regret even her. My estimable friend appeared more amiable than ever. I cannot forbear telling her, it is cruel to exert all her powers of enchantment, when I am on the brink of leaving her. Not content with that *neither*, she introduced me to Madame ——, whose address instantly prejudiced me in her favour: but when she enters into conversation, she is charming beyond imagination. This lady has been in Paris ever since our

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arrival,



arrival, not having thrown off her weeds above six weeks; / the greatest part of that time in the country; we never met, which was singularly unlucky, as I pass so much of my time with the coadjutres, and she visits at this house a young lady whom she intimately knew at the court of Petersburg, a most worthy, well-disposed young woman, but did not then seem of a turn to take the veil. Her father was a man of family of this country, her mother a Livonian of high rank, but very small fortune. *He*, like all cadets of the noblesse in France, entered early into the service. Upon his marriage with the above lady was persuaded to quit *this* for the Russian service, where the Livonians had enjoyed an extraordinary share of favour. During the reign of the empress Anne, a preference

rence was ever given to the young women of Livonia, for maids of honour, &c. consequently the daughters of Madame la Ch——e, who was of the first family in that country, were preferred to all others, and her husband provided for accordingly. He was a very worthy man, but so strongly infatuated with the *mal du païs*, as to reject some of the greatest marriages in the empire, in point of fortune, for his daughters, from the total inability he felt in himself to get over their origin, and the persuasion that every descendant of *his* must feel the same reluctance, nay horror, at such unnatural connections. How erroneous this idea of his was, a very short space of time proved. Scarce was he cold in his grave (poor man) when his favourite daughter married one of the lowest, most

contemptible of what they call in Russia the new nobility, whose manners and merit never once belied his original. Our present subject inherited her father's spirit, retired with her mother into Livonia, and on *her* death, into this convent, though she had wherewithal to live in the world, and the happiness to be much esteemed in it. The largest part of her fortune she has given to her eldest brother, lately married to a young lady of Livonia, who wanted nothing but the dequoy. By the help of *her* generosity, they are enabled to support most amply the dignity of that ancient and truly hospitable house which gave them to the world. A long digression this. But to return to my new acquaintance: my friend has settled that we are to meet every day, so long as *we* stay in Paris,

that we may renew our acquaintance, sans ceremonié, when Madame comes to England. *She* spends this day with us ; is just gone home to dress ; more than I can prevail on myself to do, until I have told you a very pretty, though melancholy tale ; the knowledge of which I owe in some measure to this lady.

*The Story of MARCELLUS.*

His father, the Earl of ———, was one of the noblemen who followed the fortunes of their unhappy monarch, James the Second, and went into France, leaving his lady far advanced in her pregnancy of our present subject. Soon as she was in a situation to travel, she followed her lord, and took the child along with her,

whose beauty, when he grew up, was only equalled by that merit, wit, politeness, and a thousand other perfections he possessed, which failed not to render him the idol, the delight of all his acquaintance. So soon as he arrived at the proper age, he entered into the army, where he behaved consistent with himself. One winter the regiment was quartered in Normandy; he lodged at the house of an officer who had an only daughter, young, beautiful, and ingenious; you will easily divine the consequence of this acquaintance was first a liking, then a love; on *his side* so violent and open, her father began to think his interposition necessary, and told my lord, with all the respect, the deference due from an inferior officer to his commander, all the warmth natural to an alarm-

ed

ed parent ; however undeserving *his* daughter might appear of the honour of being his wife, he thought her far above being his mistress ; intreated his lordship to make no delay in removing from a family which had merited better from *him*, than to render it wretched. Thus was Marcellus obliged to quit the house ; but he could not quit the misery of his own mind ; the object of his passion ever present to it, haunted him every where. Finding the young lady amply returned his love, to assure *her* of *his* faith, and secure *her's*, he proposed a mutual contract between them, which was immediately executed. This affair you may imagine could not pass in silence. Lord —, who was his colonel, and others of his relations, informed his mother, Lady —, of the whole affair. She immedi-

ately ordered him to return home ; used every argument, persuasion, nay threat, to deter him from a marriage she never would pardon, and which must inevitably ruin the young woman he loved ; the *last*, the most powerful of all her *arguments*. Yet he held out upwards of three years, young as he was, besieged on all sides, by a mother he loved, a family both he and all the world respected, and infinitely too high to brook his contaminating their blood by such an alliance. Over-powered at length by the tears and intreaties of his mother, he yielded so far, as to write a letter to the idol of his soul, conceived in the following terms :

Whatever *I* suffer, I cannot endure the bare idea of being an obstacle to your fortune, your happiness. Sure as  
I am

I am your charms have power to secure you both, in some man, less the sport of fortune, though not more truly, more tenderly yours. As the strongest *mark* of *my* affection, let me entreat you, chase from your heart and memory a wretch whose family are inexorable, determined never to receive an angel, unadorned with a long ancestral train. Short sighted, ill judging mortals. No more; receive the contract you generously bestowed, the choicest boon I have to give, and return that of the

Wretched Marcellus.

The lady instantly complied with his request, in restoring him his part of the contract, at the same time assuring him, she took it not with an intent to injure *him*, whose happiness she had ever preferred



preferred to her own, and most sincerely wished he might meet it, in some more worthy choice. She did not long survive *her* generosity and *his* change, falling into a consumption, she died within the year. The shock fell so heavily on the wretched mind of Marcellus, he never was able to recover his spirits; from the most lively, he became the most melancholy of mankind; though doomed to drag life on some years after her, he never enjoyed it. The last three months of his miserable existence, he shut himself up from all company, and died of a fever, which had no appearance, no symptoms of danger attending it.

This story is literally true; might furnish matter for a fine high-flown novel. Left it should meet so severe a lot, throw

it

it into the fire, and in a post or two I  
may perhaps have the honour of throw-  
ing another at your feet. Adieu, gen-  
tle Morvina.

L E T.

## L E T T E R   XXXVI.

I must leave this blessed retreat to-morrow, my dear Morvina, and the delightful society of my friend, and Madame ——, pleasing and instructive beyond any thing I ever met with ; they make me feel a thousand times more regret at leaving Paris than I ever felt before. These ladies are capable of forming you for the world or a convent, for the court or the cottage. They have shone in the first, and are not only content, but happy in the latter ; never having swerved from that rectitude of heart, that propriety of conduct, which  
only

only can reconcile us to ourselves, and render the winter of life more than comfortable ; make us able to please, at the time we instruct others, without having recourse to a card-table or scandal to fill up the vacant hours of the remnant of a life squandered in trifles. Judge not from this, that either *they* or *I* abjure all worldly delights, because we wish to be able to live without them. They amply shew me it is practicable, nay pleasant. What can be more so than the self-approving mind ; it renders you not only respectable in your own eyes, but respected throughout the circle of your acquaintance ; not deemed a tax on them, when not immediately wanted to fill up a vacant chair. But to you, my dear sister, I need not enlarge upon this subject ; you have already too many resources

resources in yourself, to dread dwindling into a fascine; a very pretty military term, that, not ill adapted, I hope you will allow, to those trifling nothings, many of whom you and *I* have the honour to know, and equally admire. Apropos to military; I must tell you ——— has forced his way into this house, under pretence of seeing Miss H——, a young lady who is nearly related to him, and *here* for her education; but from the efforts he has made to get introduced to the Countess, *she* suspects other motives at the bottom. Would I could see him turn friar: not that it would influence me to take the veil, or that he should be my confessor if I did. Never was there a truer maxim than that of the Duke de la Rochfoucault. “ No man can love  
 “ truly a second time the person whom  
 “ he

“ he has once truly ceased to love.” To a rational mind the first cannot happen, without sufficient cause, and after that, to return like the dog to his vomit, would scandalize rationality. I am still of opinion the extraordinary perseverance of — proceeds more from opiniatreté than love: I mean of others; self-love and vanity leaving little room in his heart for any other inhabitant. He is much admired here, and certainly is handsome; added to which, his foreign education has given him les mœurs, which have a charm above all the rest for the French; and I own I agree with them entirely in thinking the form of an angel, without them, never can please a person of tolerable taste; and sure I am, that all these together, without an heart, will ill maintain this conquest.

“ What

“ What takes our heart, must merit our  
 “ esteem.” Lady R——’s coach is  
 come ; I must shorten my letter ; no  
 great loss to you ; I feel myself growing  
 dull. My next will more than make  
 amends : I dare allow you to expect  
 much entertainment, I shall have such  
 an anecdote for you, it is worth millions.  
 Answer this soon, if you have any more  
 commissions, or I shall hardly have time  
 to execute them, and by that means lose  
 infinite pleasure ; for trust me, my dear  
 Morvina, I have a very sensible *pleasure*  
 in being employed for your service. I  
 have written a very long letter to my  
 mother, expressive of the joy I feel on  
 her recovery, though I flatter myself,  
 my conduct has not left the love and ho-  
 nour I bear her in the least degree equi-  
 vocal, and that you know with what  
 tender

tender affection and unalterable friendship I am, my dear sister, ever yours,

Henrietta.

P. S. Do you ever visit the cave ; I mean to spend much time in it ; to invoke the Muses to use no spells to prevent their answering my prayers. I know you hate scribblers ; no matter ; I will not insist on your reading all I write. Once more adieu pour le present.

L E T.



## L E T T E R   XXXVII.

My dear Morvina,

NOT to wear you out with convent anecdotes, I fend you one of a court ; no less a court than that of Russia, and of no less a man than the Emperor, Peter the First, so deservedly stiled the Great. You shall have it sans preface, which almost always tries the patience, and fatigues the mind so, as to leave little relish for the story. That it is a fact, is all that I will now say : my comments on, and how I came by it, shall follow. Know then, this prince,  
so

so superior to every other weakness, so  
 unconquerable in arms, was by no means  
 proof against the tender passions, and  
 received a wound from the bright eyes  
 of the daughter of an officer in his ar-  
 my, above the power of art to heal, or  
 the force of his resolution to sustain with  
 that dignity, that fortitude, which had  
 hitherto so peculiarly marked the cha-  
 racter of this extraordinary man,  
 throughout every scene of action. She  
 was young, perfectly beautiful, and  
 along with it all, carried the appearance  
 of virtue, which the Emperor has fre-  
 quently declared served more effectually  
 to complete her conquest, than all the  
 other agrémens she possessed; so un-  
 accountably are we made, said *he*, I  
 could not help adoring that virtue, at  
 the same instant I wished, and tried, by

every warrantable means to undermine it. But long, alas! were all his efforts vain. Not Prior's Egyptian slave received her Eastern monarch with more hauteur, or seemed more resolutely bent to mortify *his* pride, and to make him feel how feeble, how vague, all human greatness, when we presume on securing our happiness by it, even in this gew-gaw world, and suffer it to lead us beyond reason's limits. He had indeed no rival (declared at least) to baffle his hopes. Time and perseverance, he flattered himself might in love, as in war (he had frequently experienced) surmount all difficulties, and in the end give him possession of that heart, which only had power to set *his* at ease. He first attacked her vanity, believing with the generality of mankind, *that* the ruling

ling passion in a female mind; but although he offered every sacrifice to *her's* within the utmost extent of his power (to marry her was not in his power) he had the mortification, after some months close siege, to find himself just where he began. *He* next attacked her *avarice*, to the full as unsuccessfully. In short, he tried her on all sides; left no passion unflattered the human mind is heir to. At length, when *he*, from frequent repulses, very rarely the lot of princes, was reduced to despair, and upon the very verge of leaving her, she yielded; at the same time assuring him, the combats she had so long sustained between virtue, modesty, and her passion for *him* (which had all along equalled *that* his Majesty had so honorably, nay amply, manifested towards her) had produced

infinitely sorer conflicts in her mind than even *Peter the Great* ever had to encounter. But if her sufferings should happily enhance the value of an honest, though humble heart, in the eyes of her adored monarch, she must ever hereafter reflect on them with the highest gratification; that instead of idly attempting to express sentiments so far above the reach of words, she begged leave to refer his Majesty to her future conduct, for proofs of the gratitude and tenderness of an heart whose greatest glory, and warmest wish, was to render itself worthy its possessor. All this the Emperor implicitly believed, and held himself the happiest of mortals; that a life of abject slavery would but ill pay the value of a jewel so inestimable. Thus apparently they loved, and lived together

ther in perfect union for some years, till time and chance, the great discloser of human events, shewed the Emperor, beyond all possibility of doubt, the dupe her artifice had made of him, or more probably the rectitude and nobleness of his own mind; for convinced am I, a good heart will often betray the best head in the world into weaknesses that would be barely pardonable in a driveller. The Emperor was ever ornamenting and improving Petersburg; had built a fortress in the sea, which he designed for prisoners of state. No sooner was it finished than he gave a superb entertainment *there* to all the foreign ministers then resident at his court, and to many of his own nobility. Both at and after dinner the glass was pushed about briskly, consequently the whole company in

spirits. In coming out to take boat, the Polish minister, by some untoward, and for him fatal, accident, fell over the bridge and was drowned, notwithstanding every effort used to save him. The Emperor expressed infinite concern at the accident, and the inefficacy of all the remedies which had been instantly administered ; then turning to the rest of the company, he said, all papers, he thought, should be deemed sacred, and desired all the ministers *there* would be present at the taking the papers out of this unhappy man's pockets, and set their seals upon them, along with his own. In searching for papers, something fell on the floor ; the Emperor himself stooped and took it up ; to his astonishment and confusion it proved to be a picture of the lady who had so long and so unworthily

thily

thily engrossed his heart, nay, his very soul, who, if he ever suffered a pang about, it proceeded from the reflection of having seduced such inflexible, such untainted virtue and honor. Is it wonderful then, his Majesty should be curious to pry further? surely no. On observing several letters, these, said he, contain no state affairs, and opened them, read one or two, and took the remainder of that parcel, ordering the rest of the papers to be carefully sealed up, left the company, went into his barge, and the moment he landed set off post for Moscow, where he had left the mistress of his heart. He arrived there in an incredible short space of time, went directly to the house of a lady who was a friend to them both, and ordered her to send for his mistress to meet him there instantly.



She obeyed, though much surpris'd to see the Emperor so unexpectedly, and with every mark of horror, rage and despair visibly painted in his countenance. The moment the lady arriv'd, with much warmth he ask'd her how she came to write to the Polish minister : she at first denied ever having written to him ; on which his Majesty produced the packet of letters taken out of that minister's pocket, all of her writing, and in the common stile of fondness, informing her likewise how they fell into his hands, and of the unfortunate end of his rival. Not having heard of *his* death till that moment, forgetting, or at least regardless of all danger, she deliver'd herself up to grief, to passion ; burst into tears and woeful lamentations for the loss of all her heart held dear ; while the Emperor,

ror, in a storm of rage, reproached her, as he had but too just cause, with falsehood, ingratitude, and every vice that degrades and sinks humanity; when, to the amazement of all present, he on a sudden became calm as possible, and turning towards her, said, Madam, I too well, too poignantly feel, how hard it is for those who conquer others, to conquer themselves; 'tis *there* true glory lies, above all in love: sensible as I am of the unfair, injurious treatment, offered by you, in return for an excess of fondness, an unlimited confidence, an esteem you never merited from me, I cannot hate you; but to continue to live with you, must render me contemptible in the eyes of the whole world, and what is still more painful to endure, in my own eyes. You shall never want the comforts weak-

can give, if any there are for one so shamefully lost, abandoned to every sense of virtue; but determined am I never to see you more. He kept his word with her; and as violent passions which have neither honour nor honesty for their basis soon subside, she consented to marry an officer in the Russian service, to whom the Emperor was always exceedingly good, but continued him in some profitable employment far distant from the court. This great man, you see, though by no means proof against love, was proof against the follies of it. The beauties of his mistress had indeed power to make him so far forget his rank, the dignity of his situation, as to kneel, implore, and supplicate his subject; but nothing could make him court vice, though couched

beneath the form of an angel, or cherish a serpent in his bosom. Though you and I, my friend, hold all illicit amours criminal, in the eyes of men, even men of honour, they appear otherwise, and their vanity (which by the way is not a jot less than ours) readily excuses every breach of chastity given up to themselves, but breach of promise, playing them false, making them the dupes of their own credulity, and sacrificing them to a rival, a man of sense, with the smallest degree of sentiment, never did, or ever will pardon. My authority for the above anecdote resided many years at the Russian court, in one of the most elevated characters, her husband being minister from one of the greatest European courts to the Emperor, and though she was not absolutely an eye-witness of

the facts recited, she had it from a lady who was, and on whom she could depend. Did you know *her* as well as I have the honour and pleasure to know her, you would not only depend on, but be charmed with every thing she says. Though not in the meridian of her charms, her understanding, her elegance, would now render her an acquisition to any court; and to make use of my Lord Bacon's words, her person at that time must have been the best letter of recommendation to *any* court, I dare affirm, from the remains of beauty she still possesses, accompanied with a thousand graces, so necessary towards charming the mind, at the same time she instructs it, of which no person living is more capable. To a thorough knowledge of the world, she joins an excellent understanding,

standing, with an ease and vivacity peculiar to herself; that with all this she must have a sovereign contempt for triflers you will readily believe, but she is too well-bred to betray her feelings, however irksome the company of fools may be to her, they always part from her, satisfied both with her and themselves. She wisely says we must take the world as it goes, not expect miracles should be wrought in our favour; that they are more worthy our compassion than our ridicule, which should be reserved for vice and affectation only, not cruelly thrown out on innate defects, over which a good heart would wish to draw a veil. In short, my dear Morvina, was I to attempt a panegyric on Madame ———, I should soon find my pen unequal to it, and send you a volume

at least. What is still worse than all the rest, I should wound that modesty ever attendant on superlative geniuses, and risque the loss of the good opinion I flatter myself Madame —— now honours me with, and which I shall by every means in my power wish to preserve, as a treasure inestimable. As it is not my turn to wish to monopolize any good, I sincerely wish you had the pleasure of this lady's acquaintance. Since she has some thoughts of going to England, who knows what another winter may produce. What it will not produce, I can venture to affirm, no, nor time itself, the smallest change in the heart of your affectionate friend and sister.

Write to me soon. I with the innumerable collection of love stories I send  
you

you will not render you an infidel to the extraordinary resolution I have so long boasted. But I would not have you ascribe it to levity or insensibility, which would destroy the whole merit of self-conquest. Adieu ma chere.

LET



## L E T T E R XXXVIII.

NEVER was joy more strongly painted in any countenance than in Lady R——'s, on my entering her dressing-room. You would hardly conceive it possible that her good understanding and knowledge of the world could give way to such extraordinary absurd fears she sometimes harbours on my account. As they can have no source but in her tenderness for me, I ought, and certainly do, in the main, love and esteem her for it, though, I confess to you, I am often tempted to be exceedingly angry, did not le bien-séance prevent me; till I

cool

cool enough to reflect, and then a more laudable motive, viz. gratitude, and every sentiment that adorns the honest heart condemns a momentary forgetfulness of her goodness towards me, shews me the impossibility of my repaying the thousandth part of what I owe her, and loads me with the worst of ills, self-reproach. Both her Ladyship and Lord R—— read me a lecture on the danger of listening to the countess on matters of faith. The opinion I had of, as well as affection for her, joined to the sophistical arguments all of that persuasion so well knew how to make use of, might, they said, have more weight on my mind than I was just then aware of. All I could say was of no avail to convince them we never entered into any controversy about religion. I much fear, if I attempt

attempt to lay another night at the convent, they will judge it necessary to hurry away sooner than they proposed. You see, my dear, we are not allowed any pleasure on earth without some alloy, even the most rational. It is time to tell you I like Madame — more and more each time I see her, and feel infinite satisfaction in the thoughts of her coming to England, as well from the opportunity it will give me of presenting my dear Morvina to a person whose knowledge and fund of entertainment is as the French say, sans bornes, as the singular pleasure and real good I have, and ever shall reap in her charming society; besides that I know, from proofs the most incontestible, her heart is to the full as valuable, and as much superior to the world in general as her head is. I cannot prevail

vail

vail on her to go over with us. Both Lord and Lady R—— have pressed it warmly, and with that singular politeness which accompanies all they say and do. Madame has money affairs to settle before she can leave this delightful place. This morning Sanchonia surprised, and greatly vexed me, with a letter from ——. She had not the power she said to refuse taking it: I believe her most implicitly; not doubting it came accompanied with that never-failing pass-par-tout that makes its way to Abigail's hearts. I returned it to him unopened, and was exceedingly enraged at her daring to disobey my strict commands to her, on a point she well knew I had so much at heart, and in which I was too steadily determined ever to alter. The only excuse I can find for her absurdity is,

is, I really believe she is not yet convinced I have absolutely discarded him that place in my heart he once held, in despite of reason, prudence, I had almost said duty; and I will confess to you, had he not depended *too much* on the power of *his charms*, and my sensibility, and kept some measures in his strange conduct, he might have duped me longer, perhaps till it had been too late to repent. Happy that it is otherwise. I cannot, ought not ~~to~~ repine at a misfortune many have felt as well as myself, nor vainly deem it an extraordinary stroke of heroism to conquer an ill placed liking, or rather the not persisting to like a man who turned out the very opposite of every thing my ideas had figured him. His persevering to persecute me can arise from nothing but vanity, or obstinacy,

or

or perhaps he imagines Lord R—— will leave me his fortune. I cannot think too harshly of him. When you reflect, my dear, on his dissipated, profligate manner of living, you must think as I do, spite of the extraordinary share of good-nature you possess. There are many follies young men of the very best understandings may, and often do fall into; but when they arise from faults in the heart, the want of truth and honour, the man is irretrievably lost. With time and knowledge of the world he may increase in hypocrisy, more artfully gloss over his vile purposes, deceive the unwary, ruin and betray his associates in vice, at the time he terms them the friends of his bosom, the black inhabitants of which allow him no rest within, therefore he rambles about, seeking  
whom

whom he may devour, lives despised, and dies with horror, dreading to receive the just rewards of his evil deeds. Good God! my Morvina, what upon earth can equal the misery of falling a victim to such a wretch ; but as I trust the goodness of providence will preserve us from a lot *so* severe, I will change a subject which shocks humanity, and leaves a horror on the best mind in the universe. I am called to dinner, but will resume my pen when that is over, though I am strongly persuaded you will think my letter long enough. I am returned, my dear sister, for one moment only, for I go this evening to the new comedy, with Madame the Duchess of M——, and my Russ friend ; am not dressed ; besides, I must clear up my countenance ; they would rally me to death,

death, were they to find me so much disconcerted on receiving ——'s letter. I almost fear they would be inclined to think with Sanchonia, which I hope at least you know me too well to do, and that you will believe, unchangeable as my heart is towards those I love (without their giving me ample cause to withdraw it) where I unfortunately meet with cause, it is equally resolute; and to you, my Morvina, ever warm, affectionate, and friendly.

Henrietta.

L E T.



## L E T T E R XXXIX.

My dear Morvina,

WE set out for England to-morrow; but harass not your mind by following us throughout our journey; depend upon it we shall get safe to the end of it, wind, weather, and every thing favouring us. Lady B—— was charmed with my friend, but since *she* did not marry for love, you know, she consequently cannot think so delicately on that subject. She wonders a woman so handsome as *she* now is, and so young as she then was, should give up the world for  
a husband

a husband so unworthy of it. In short, Lady B—— thinks the Count may die, sees no sort of reason why the Countess might not have entered into a second marriage, been as much in love with another, though from woeful experience more wary in fixing her choice. But the Countess thinks as I do; and to you there needs no comment on my way of thinking, however singular it is. I own to you I hate to enter upon the subject with Lady B—— : I am more, than ever I was, convinced a Cicero could not talk well on what he did not feel; indeed we have proofs *he could* not; witness his patriotism; with what sophistical oratory does he attempt to gloss over his duplicity, which glares thro' all. When I came home I found Lord R—— in raptures with ———; my aunt asked

him if he wished him for a nephew: No, madam, replied he, I should be sorry my niece should fall in love with every pretty fellow she sees, or I talk of; so should I, said Lady R——, but I would not answer she is proof against the charms of the man whose encomiaſt you now are. Let me intreat you, my dear, not to put her perpetually in mind of a person her own good ſenſe makes her wiſh to forget. The affair began to grow ſerious; I was obliged to pull Lady R—— by the ſleeve, aſſure her lord a younger brother would never have charms ſufficient to make me forget the world, every pleaſure it could give, and how unequal I was to living on love in a cottage. Here this abſurd nonſenſe ended, and here I muſt end, for I drink tea this evening with the happy Counteſs, *à-la-mode des Anglois.*

Anglois. Bonaria supplies my place at home, but begs I will not make a very long visit, or promise to take the veil, for he reckons my noviciate is over. Farewell. The other side shall be filled when I return from the convent, which has rendered the most amiable of women the happiest of any *this world* can boast of. Just returned from my dear friend am I, and found Lord R—— dozing in an arm-chair, my Lady lolling in another, Bonaria sighing himself into air, on a sofa, a mile from either of them. Had my spirits not been too much oppressed, I should have laughed at so ridiculous a scene. Lady B—— sups with us to-night en famille. The multitude of pretty presents I received from the Countess, and the rest of her society, is innumerable; but as you will

see them, I will not tell you what they are, except my poor sister Louise's present, whose story I writ you some time since ; it is a model (carved in ivory, ornamented with gold) of this convent, and the entrance to it ; at the inward gate stands your humble servant, a little figure in wax, elegantly habited, a glory shining round ; in the midst are these words, pointing towards *me*, *je vous appeller*. Another call makes me finish this sooner than I wished. Lady B—— is come. Adieu, my dear Morvina.

L E T.

## L E T T E R XL.

THIS instant arrived, my dear Morvina, in perfect health and spirits. Nothing occurred in our journey worth relating. The noise of French postilions, boat-men, &c. has almost turned my brain. We shall not get to town till to-morrow evening; Lady R—— will not be able to stir to-day, she was so horridly sea-sick, though we have done nothing but laugh since we landed. Lord R—— and Bonaria were ridiculous beyond any print of Hogarth; the latter infinitely more distressed with the fear of disgusting me, than all the pain and sickness he suffered. I shall just acquaint

my mother with our being once more safe on British ground, and, what is real truth, that I most impatiently long to throw myself at her feet, to receive that blessing I know she prays may light on me. Adieu. Lord and Lady R—— are much yours; but nobody more sincerely so than my dear Morvina's steady friend.

Dover, Wednesday Morning.

L E T.

## L E T T E R XLI.

London, Monday.

WE went to court yesterday : it was very full, not fine ; at least the glare of the French court made it appear less so than usual to me. One mode of theirs I wish we would adopt : their officers never go to court in their uniforms, tho' they wear them much more every where else. I have found a number of my acquaintance married since I left England, but that by no means astonished me ; but the multitude that have been unmarried within that very short space of time has indeed amazed me. The ce-



remony (I will not say difficulty) of procuring a divorce, probably renders it more desirable ; for in France, where a lettre de cachet serves the turn, and is seldom refused to a husband, it is very rarely asked for. This may perhaps be better accounted for by the politeness and ease with which men and their wives live together there ; neither believes they have a right to tease the other with their ill temper, nor that the desire of pleasing is to be lost, that is to say thrown off with the lover and the mistress. *That sentiment and good breeding* are certainly necessary towards the support of social happiness, where there are less near connections, we have hourly proofs ; and, next to religious principles, *that* ought to be carefully and early inculcated. Saturday we went to the opera ; wretchedly

ly bad; yet they will be bearable after the horrid attempts to music in France, where the finest musical instruments in the world are made, as you will say when you hear my harpsichord, that my friend the coadjutrix made me a present of. I mentioned it to you before; it was at the chateau she lent us. On my admiring it, she had it brought to Paris, and will send it here so soon as she can have it properly packed up. It is by many degrees the finest toned harpsichord I ever heard; belonged to the poor Princess, who was an absolute mistress of music, I am told, and which indeed I see, by some of her Highness's compositions the Countess did me the honour to give me. Bonaria set out for his place in the country this morning, which was unavoidably necessary,

towards the settling his affairs, which he has never done since he came of age. So soon as I know my mother's resolution, I shall fix my rout, en attendant, believe me ever yours.

L E T.

## L E T T E R XLII.

THE agitation of mind, the real affliction poor Bonaria's death has given me, made me for some days incapable of every thing, or you would not have been a fortnight without hearing from me. The day he was to have been in town, and to dine with us, his own servant arrived express by eight in the morning to acquaint me with his death. He died on the road in his return to town, of a most violent fever, after eight and forty hours illness only; was insensible immediately after he was seized; continued so till it pleased Heaven to release him.

He had made no new disposition of his affairs ; but on his brother's coming to his house in town, and looking over his papers, &c. he found a small box tied up, sealed and directed for me, which he sent directly to me ; its contents are his family jewels, worth at least twenty thousand pounds, which I shall certainly restore to his brother, who is, I hear, soon to be married to a very amiable young woman of fashion, but small fortune. I have lost in poor Bonaria a sincere and sensible friend, and truly lament him. The world had long designed us for each other, and I have received as many messages of condolance as if I had really been married to him, though nothing was ever farther from my thoughts ; nor did I wish any thing more ardently, than to find his friendship as  
abstracted

abstracted from passion as mine was, and I grieve to reflect that I caused (though inadvertently) so many uneasy hours to the man on earth I esteemed, who I loved with the affection of a sister, and who, if I could have loved more, I might have rendered him and myself happy. He had many virtues, as few vices I suppose as any earthly being. My old friend Miss S—— was the first and only person I desired to see, on receiving the melancholy account, &c. She came instantly, found me in bed; her tender feelings on the occasion were to me great consolation; her friendly tears, which flowed abundantly, forced out mine, which surprise and horror till then denied vent to. Lord and Lady R—— are all goodness to me; but I believe I shall find it a hard task to persuade them,

and

and my friend S——, love has no part in this sorrowful mourning. You will, I know, readily credit it, and bear a rational part in my sufferings; but alas! my dear Morvina, how peculiarly are *we* made; how few of the very best people on earth would not rally our sentiments as romantic; for all that, and the pain they often cost me, I would not be without them for any earthly good. But I feel I am straying from that delicacy I admire, and mean to preserve, in wounding your gentle friendly disposition, by dwelling so long on this doleful tale. Would I was with you in the country. Lord and Lady R—— go tomorrow to ———. I stay in town till I hear from my mother: not at this house: I have my lodging by the year: it is in effect a house, and much preferable, in  
my

my opinion, to that of *any* other person; with a mind so ill at ease; above all, when the owners are gone out of it. They wished me much to accompany them into the country; but since I mean to go far from town when I do leave it, I have many things to do, and many people to see before I go. Besides, the brother of honest Bonaria I must see, to restore to him what I certainly have no right to, nor inclination to keep, though I feel at the same time a most grateful sense of the friendship of the donor. Farewell, my dear sister; believe me ever yours.

L E T.



## L E T T E R XLIII.

My dear Morvina,

THE letter I received this post from my mother has determined me. I shall leave this place in a week or ten days; but you shall hear from me again before that time.

The brother of my poor friend has this moment left me. His distress is worthy the brother of Bonaria, and the fortune he has left him. He pressed me exceedingly to wear the jewels his brother had always hoped I would do him the honor to accept of. On my absolute refusal,

he

he entreated me, with the most earnest politeness, to accept, at least, of some little remembrance in honour of one of the best of men, as well as the most sincere of my friends. I then took a pair of pearl bracelets I knew were bought for me, and which I refused, to the unspeakable discontent of poor Bonaria. The pearls cost fifteen hundred pounds, the roses which fastened them about six ; they are extremely pretty, composed of brilliants and sapphires. I happened one evening at Lady B——'s to admire Lady F——'s bracelets ; *he* played at our table, heard her tell me where she had bought them, that there was one pair more left, and she believed the only pair in town. The instant he left *us*, he drove to the place, and brought them to me in the morning. But taking presents  
from

from a man one is not going to marry must certainly be wrong; I mean presents of value. A picture of him, done when he was in Italy, and extremely like, his brother brought me as a present from himself, fixed in an elegant gold case, richly ornamented with brilliants and emeralds. La bienfiance forbid my refusing *that*, neither had I any inclination to refuse it, though, to own the truth to you, my dear sister, I think it only serves to increase my melancholy, to perpetuate the remembrance of what I should wish to forget. I cannot but reflect how ill fated I am, or rather how wrong headed and undiscerning I was, in giving my heart to an object so unworthy of it; to want the spirit, the resolution to withdraw it (though I had every reason on my side) and bestow it on a person

person all the world adored, and who of all mankind merited my regard.

Lady P—— and Madame D—— were with me this morning, very agreeable and friendly. If their friendships were permanent as they are warm for the time they do last, how inestimable would they be: what a treasure! But alas, how few, how very few have a single grain of stability in their whole composition! *They* are very desirable acquaintance, take them for all in all. They by no means approve of my romantic generosity (as *they* term it) in returning the casquet, &c. Love of wealth you know makes the summum bonum of their character, therefore you will hardly suppose they would applaud a generous action in another they must  
admire

admire and envy, yet want the spirit to emulate. I have promised to spend the evening with them; I could not muster up spirits sufficient for the whole day. These extraordinary strokes of fortune I meet with, incline me to believe they are meant for my good, *necessary* to detach my affections from the follies and idle pursuits of the world, which might perhaps otherwise have laid too fast hold on me. With a disposition ever ready to be pleased, born in a situation to enjoy the amusements of the world, had no rubs been thrown in my way, I probably should have been too much charmed with it, to endure the thoughts of leaving it for a better without a regret we none of us ought to feel. But not to make you feel more than your share, farewell, my dear Morvina. God bless you.

L. E. T.

## L E T T E R XLIV.

My dear Morvina,

I Stayed at Lady P——'s till two o'clock this morning, and was as much amused as my mind would allow me to be. Many very agreeable people you know one always meets *there*. Poor Bonaria's sudden death was the general topic; every mortal lamented him, and it affected me so much, Lady P—— often turned the conversation, which has, I dare say, convinced most of the company I had something more than bare friendship in my heart towards him. Is it not wonderful, so few people have any idea of  
friendship

friendship unmixed with passion, ever subsisting between those of different sexes: sure this is carrying their ideas very little (if any thing) higher than the brute creation ; and I cannot forbear crying out with the publican, *I thank God I am not as other men are, &c.* Entre nous, I wish the resemblance may not be carried still further, that from the superiority I frequently feel on these occasions, I assume not a merit to which I have no just claim, as being by no means dependant on myself. I dine this day with the Duchefs of N———. Notwithstanding all I have said, you *cannot know* my opinion of her, since it increases every time I have the honour to converse with her Grace. To the most pleasing understanding she adds every grace ; is so thoroughly well-bred, you never feel that

that superiority of every kind she holds over you : she is extremely lively, has infinite wit and humour, but never suffers it to stray beyond la bienséance. The whole family are exceedingly amiable; I both love and admire them; they are all intimately known to Madame la Coadjutrice, who I had a very long letter from yesterday, and a message in it to the Duchess of N——. To *me* she is so *obliging*, and her letter so far above the common standard of epistolary writing, I shall keep it for your perusal, though I am a thousand times more exact than I ever was in burning my letters, since this rage for printing every body's so generally prevails. To-morrow evening I go to Lord R——'s for two nights; from thence to Lord M——'s for as long; then to you with all possible expedition,

I



pedition, to enjoy the beauties of the finest country by far I have *yet* beheld, and what is much more, the charming society and friendship of persons in the world most near, and deservedly dear to me, whose professions, however violent, I can never suspect are equivocal ; where interest as well as inclination unite us, and whom neither absence, distance, change of place or climate, has been able to chafe from my ideas one single moment ; for the truth of this, or any thing else, I am satisfied my dear Morvina requires no further testimony than the word of her affectionate sister.

As I travel post, I shall be with you as soon as any letter I can write after I leave Lord M——'s. Should I happen to get there before the post has left it, I  
will

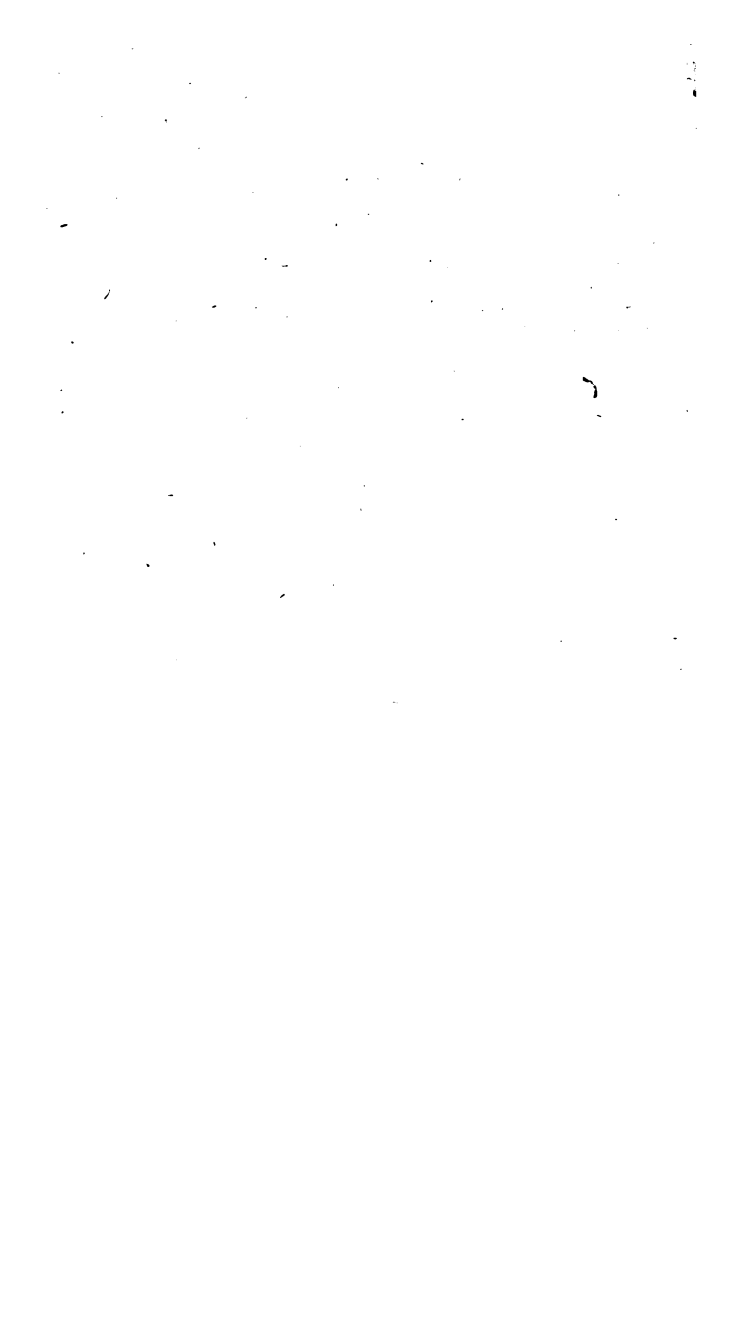
will scrawl a few lines to you ; till  
when adieu.

I am in time for the post, and both Lord and Lady M—— say I must write you I cannot leave this place a week yet ; but notwithstanding I love them much, I will not so long delay a pleasure I have for some time past proposed myself, of seeing my mother and all of you on Thursday next. I told her Ladyship so in my letter from Lord R——'s. *They* were amazingly good to me, loaded me with presents and caresses. My aunt shed tears in great abundance, and said, (what *I wish* may not prove *too* true) she should never live to see me more. The friendship of Lord and Lady M—— I find ever the same. What a happy rational pair : neither renouncing the world, nor running riot with it ; happy in the

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highest degree in each other, yet always glad to see their friends; no separate views, no separate interests; one soul actuates both. They have promised me a visit this summer. If my mother approves, and will join us, we are to make the tour of Britain. Should *she* judge it too great a fatigue for her, Lady E——, who is goodness itself, will stay with her till our return. More of this when we meet; the post hardly allows me time to assure you, my dear Morvina, I am ever yours.

**T**HE following Letters were found amongst the preceding ones, and ought, the Editor thinks, to go along with them, from the additional entertainment they will afford the reader, as well as from their connection with the rest of the work, if this bagatelle merits the appellation of a work.



## L E T T E R XLV..

THE mortification I sustained on finding you flown, my dear madam, when I arrived in this over-grown metropolis, seven times larger than when I left England, is easier imagined than told; therefore set your head to work, or rather consult the feelings of your own friendly heart, and thence judge of mine, and the part I take in your present sufferings. The loss of friends is ever a sore grievance, but the suddenness of the estimable Bonaria's death, renders it a thousand times more afflicting. His general character must make him univer-

fully lamented. I will not expatiate on his particular merit to you, my dear madam ; your generous heart and gentle nature pays, I know, due tribute to his worth ; and I much fear, a friendship so well placed, devoid of those weaknesses which too frequently tarnish the friendship of different sexes, will lay faster hold on your mind than you are just at this time aware of. Might I advise, it should be, that you quit the retirement you are now charmed with instantly ; perhaps the more so, because you can indulge a melancholy you ought to shun. I hope Lady ——— keeps her resolution of going to Bath. Nothing better in your situation than a crowd ; and allowing it may not always be such as you would wish, still it will rouse that reflection which is ever prone to return to its favourite

yourite object, when nothing appears to draw it off, consequently delights in silence and solitude. But alas! how widely am I straying from my own plan. The business of your friends is to amuse you! I have ample means, 'by only doing justice to your French friends, and keeping my word, by delivering their messages. To begin then, your beloved and lovely Coadjutrix, spite of her philosophy, owns her heart is ill at ease without you, and secretly wishes you had an inward call to ———. She loves you, therefore it is no more than natural she should wish for what *she* thinks conducive to both *your* good and pleasure, as well as her own. I know not whether I should be less reluctant to trust you with her now, than Lady R—— was; for besides that you are in a fit



temper of mind to be worked up to enthusiasm, that amiable, sensible woman grows more and more bigoted each day she lives. Your harpsichord is arrived safe at my house, and I will have it forwarded to you the moment you tell me where. I have brought besides trinkets innumerable for you, both from the Countess and the sisterhood. Louise has sent a drawing of hers, extremely like you, in the habit of the convent, and hopes it will convince you nothing is so becoming as a veil. That sister Louise could carry so striking a resemblance of you in her eye astonished me, till the Countess shewed me a miniature you gave her. My poor Russ friend shed tears at our parting, but owns she never knew such perfect happiness as she experiences in the convent. She is truly  
deserving

deserving of it, for a better being lives not. I entered a little into the world too before I quitted Paris, was often at the Marchioness's, where you was much enquired after, as well as lamented by the whole coterie. The Marquis de la Jamaque talks of you sans cesse, dies to present you to no matter who, but those he judges you have taste enough to like. The Duchess of M—— truly loves you. As to your adored Lady B——, I confess I wonder at your extraordinary partiality for her. Les mœurs she has, does not want common understanding, a bright one she cannot pretend to, and when she (as I have sometimes seen her) aims at being witty, she strains so hard, a pound of jalap would scarce produce a syllable. Her mind is uninformed, she knows not the use of words, or their sense. To this,

K. 5.

believe.

believe me, she loved Bonaria, consequently hated you. But I see you are angry, therefore I will finish by assuring you I am much more than her Ladyship is, or ever was, yours.

LET

## L E T T E R XLVI.

YOUR partiality to the writer, my dear madam, can alone render my letters agreeable to one of your taste. I will fairly own to you I am more flattered to owe it to that motive, than to my own talents, had I any to be vain of. I do not remember I arraigned your judgment, though I cannot think your attachment to Lady B—— the strongest mark you ever gave of it. I am well informed she was by no means worthy the trust you reposed in her, and acted not only a double, but a diabolical part,

K 6

relative

relative to Bonaria : he saw it, abhorred her for it, but would not risque incurring your displeasure by attempting to remove prejudices in her Ladyship's favour you seemed to cherish, as necessary to your very existence. Harm you she could not. Her house was the ton ; you preferred it to every other ; and he had the happiness to spend much of his time with you *there*. A truth *I am* convinced of, and wish you to know, *is*, that no woman of gallantry ever was, or can be a friend to one of her own sex. It is always in the power of a man who pleases her pride, avarice, or vanity, to break it at once ; and there are *men* who often take pains to break such connections, merely for their own amusement. I am not clear your friends H—— and C—— are not of this species. That the friendship

friendship of women of fashion are necessary to each other, I will readily subscribe to: if our judgment errs in the choice of them, it is much wiser to sink it upon the world, than render ourselves the joke of it, and by our fracas furnish topics for every idle conversation. If my last letter displeased you, where I mentioned Lady B——, what am I to expect for this: no matter; I will always, on every occasion, use the freedom of a real friend, and shall never feel myself more obliged to you, than when you assume the same right of friendship, in my idea the great charm of it. The town is very hot, dusty, dull, and empty. The birth-day over, it will become a desert. I mean to figure *there*; but after such a residence abroad must run the gauntlet. I am to be presented

next

next Sunday. My birth-day gown, a dark coloured lustring, trimmed with my poor Livonian's present to me. If Lady H—— insists not on my promise of going with her into Scotland this year, I should be infinitely happy to accompany you throughout the tour you mention, even to contemplate the skulls of the Druids, provided you insure me I shall descend the cloud-topped hills unhurt by Rhid Rice's \* spells. Seriously, I impatiently long to see a country my favourite Lord L——n paints so lovely. I saw him yesterday; he says he did not stay long enough to see half the beauties of Wales, and wants powers to do justice

\* Rhid Rice, a famous Welch bard, caused every Saxon who dared approach his chair, which stood on an impenetrable eminence, to return either a madman or a poet, which ever their faith in *him* merited.

to those he did see. He likes the people, I mean the commonalty, whence we must judge of national characters; says they breathe the true spirit of liberty, untainted by licentiousness; honour their superiors; are supported by them; not as slaves, but friends and fellow soldiers; that there is not a man from the lowest peasant, upwards, who would not risque his life for the families whom they traditionally know descended from the ancient heroes and princes of their country, of whom there are besides many authentic records in the British language, well worth translating. They would give us an history of a people who have never yet been equalled in the field or in the cabinet; be the best key to the English history, the early part of which is counted fabulous, from our ignorance of the language



guage it was written in. The Saxons knew not letters, and if they had, would have transmitted it down to us through the medium of false prejudices. If this will not procure my pardon for all I hinted of Lady B——, nothing can. My next shall bring you my opinion of the English court: in grandeur I think it cannot surpass ours at Petersburg. The story I so long promised, will take up too much room to be added to this letter, shamefully long of itself, unless it were more entertaining. The pen of a female is, you see, as indefatigable as her tongue. Let me say as much for you, my dear friend, and rest assured your letters are at all times, and in all places, most agreeable to me, from the affection I bear you, abstracted from the entertainment they fail not to bring to your ever faithful friend. Would

Would you believe it, Lady M——, who we rather pitied than envied for her riotous spirits, is gone abroad with an absolute determination to take the veil. I should be sorry, was not any thing preferable to the situation we knew her in. Had she been left to those to whom she belonged, she might have passed through life respectably enough; not that I ever deemed her Ladyship an estimable character; but all the world are not so nice as our coterie. Let me hear from you soon, and when you purpose setting out on this charming tour. I am glad Lord R—— makes one in the party; I hear him well spoken of by all people of taste.

L E T.

## L E T T E R XLVII.

ALL well over, my dear friend, most graciously received, &c. A pretty paragraph enough you will read in the St. James's Chronicle, great part of your study I reckon under the old oaks. Joking apart, I never was better pleased with my reception at any court. Their Majesties are all our ideas can form of people in their high rank and station; gracious, benevolent, polite, yet never sink from that port necessary to maintain true dignity. But how idle am I, to tell you what you so well know; suffice it to say, I think there is something more flattering,

flattering, more pleasing in the manners of the Queen than I ever beheld; something new and civil to say to every body; not satisfied with the common routine of a court, shews an heart-felt attention, a desire to please, to preserve the hearts of their subjects, which in despite of round-head principles, city ribaldry, and American politics, I trust they will ever do. The birth-day was very elegant, more pretty than splendid, owing to the season of the year. Many lace trimmings of immense value, and many ladies very fine in jewels, particularly pearls, my favourite finery: many very beautiful women. I see you impatient for my story. To keep you no longer in suspense; I give you the following anecdote I had from people of judgment, veracity, and high rank about the court of Petersburg.

Prince

Prince Menzikoff was of very low birth. By mere accident Peter the Great met with him : finding his natural abilities superlatively great, *he* raised him by degrees to the highest offices in the empire, all of which *he* enjoyed during the reign of the empress Catharine, which succeeded that of her husband, Peter the Great, and in *her* will she nominated Menzikoff regent, during the minority of Peter's grandson, who was at that time very young. The regent thought fit to marry, or rather to contract the Emperor to *his* eldest daughter ; a step that could not fail raising the highest indignation in the minds of the ancient and noble families of Russia, tho' his power was too great to be opposed openly. Some of them ventured nevertheless to intrust the young monarch's

sister,

sister, though not more than fourteen years of age ; also the Princess Elizabeth, their aunt, not above seventeen or eighteen ; a necessary expedient (however dangerous it appeared) since *they* could not be denied access to the Emperor, which all others were, the regent and his creatures only excepted ; and his Majesty kept mostly in the country. Menzikoff had a fine house about five miles further from Petersburg than the Emperor's palace, to which *he* added a noble chapel, to the consecration of which he invited his imperial pupil, a ceremony he had never seen. Menzikoff went thither himself to make preparations proper for the reception of his son-in-law and sovereign. This absence of *his* was instantly laid hold on to play off the well concerted plot. A very old man

man of quality came into the Emperor's apartment, and in a flood of tears (which he had at command) threw himself at his feet, saying he was come to take his last leave of his Majesty, as it was more than probable he should never see him again. The child asked him if he was sick, which made him talk in such a strain : he said no ; but as his Majesty had banished him, he was *too* old ever to expect to return, even *though* his innocence should appear, as he was certain it would. The Czar said *he* had never banished him ; upon which he produced the order for his banishment, which was a real one. The young Princess desired he would retire into the anti-chamber for some little time, as her brother was so thoroughly affected. No sooner had this old experienced courtier withdrawn

withdrawn himself, than the young Princess began lamenting most bitterly the lot of the empire; above all, the unhappy situation of the young monarch, at once her much loved *brother* and *dear sovereign*, whose name heretofore *revered* and *honoured*, was now daily prostituted to the will of a *low born tyrant*, made a sanction for injustice, cruelty, and every infamous action his vile heart could dictate. The poor child, weeping most bitterly, cried, pray, my dear sister, advise me what is to be done in this critical juncture; send for my aunt, she replied, consult her: at that instant the Princess Elizabeth entered the apartments, bathed in tears, told the Emperor the regent had taken all her horses, that she was reduced to borrow some to pay her duty to his Majesty. This scene was *se-*  
judiciously



judiciously laid, that Menzikoff immediately followed her: he came in order to carry the Emperor to *his* house, whose spirits were so much hurt by the agitation he so lately sustained, he was weeping violently, and stood too much in awe of the regent to endure the thought of an interview, and therefore cried out, I will not see him; stand by me, guards; I am, I will be your sovereign: upon which he was refused admittance; and in his surprise, committed a most capital error. In returning to his own house to consider how to act at such a crisis, he gave his enemies time and opportunity to finish what they had so successfully begun, and render all efforts on his part abortive. No sooner had Menzikoff left the court, than the Princess Natalia represented to her brother the necessity

there

there was of exerting his royal authority without delay, by imprisoning Menzikkoff, who might otherwise confine his Majesty, and probably put every other person who was in the apartments when he was denied admittance to death. She advised him to send the old nobleman already mentioned with an order, signed by himself, to Petersburg, to take possession of the citadel as governor; and at the same time an officer with a strong guard to the regent's house, to put him and his whole family under arrest. So suddenly and secretly was this affair transacted, all was over before night; and the very next day the Emperor went to Petersburg, where all the nobility crowded about him. A council was called, the regent with his whole family banished. Unluckily, the Emperor

conceived an extraordinary opinion of, and liking to, the young Prince Dolgorucky, a most worthless profligate, who, on the death of the Emperor's sister, which happened soon after I went into that country, kept his Majesty constantly employed in hunting, and other idle sports. The poor Princess had hardly been dead a year, when *he* contracted *his* sister to the Emperor, who was much in love with, and beloved by another. The day fixed on for the marriage the Emperor died of the small-pox. The Empress Anne succeeded to the empire, who immediately banished the favourite and all *his* house, to the place where the regent and his family were confined. Some say the two empresses elect met in their prison : others, that the first died about a month before the last arrived.

The

The first of these unfortunate ladies, I've been told, lived in all the pomp, and had all the honours of an empress paid her, for some months before her degradation, which levelled her with the very meanest of the people, in dress and every other article; and to aggravate every other grievance, she was also totally deprived of liberty. The last I knew in the rank of a woman of quality; saw her in all the grandeur of an empress, and kissed her hand as such; and alas! I saw her a prisoner, and such I believe she remained long after I left that court. To survive such a reverse of fortune required all the spirit of a Dolgorucky. Menzikoff had not innate pretensions to that greatness of soul ever attendant on true nobility of blood, nevertheless, he sustained his misfortunes with singular

L 2                      firmness.

firmness. From being full of gross humours, with a bad habit of body, he recovered health and plumpness, though condemned to pass the remainder of his days at Borosowa, situated on the most distant frontiers of Siberia. The Princess, *his* consort, grown blind with weeping, died on the road *there*; the rest of his family followed him into exile, where, after some years, he died of repletion of blood, there being not one person to be found in the place capable of opening a vein.

That this immense letter merits some little return I hope you will allow, and readily believe no person is more sincerely yours than the writer.

Whether or no I go into Scotland this year is still doubtful. If I can properly  
defer

defer it to another year, you may depend upon seeing me before the revolution of another moon. Encore adieu.

L 3      L E T.

## L E T T E R XLVIII.

WHEN I am not a punctual correspondent to *you*, my amiable *friend*, pity, but never condemn me; rest assured it proceeds from some unfortunate interruption, never from any fault of mine. Love of pleasure, spite of philosophy, you know I avow, and in the absence of my friends I know none greater than that of hearing from them. Since my arrival in this country, I have never had a single day to myself; the whole world flock to see me, and pay me many compliments; and tho' I have ever told you, my dear Madame, the people  
are

are in general well-bred and sensible, they appear more so now than ever, and most politely tell me they exert themselves in hopes of keeping me amongst them. Their stile of living, I confess, is in my opinion much superior to the generality of countries in England. Your house is ever full of company, yet every one spends their mornings selon leurs goûts. There are horses, and all sorts of conveyances for out-door amusements. Books, music, et tout sort de jeux, within doors. You never meet more than you choose till dinner. The tables are well served, every thing elegant, music and every other incentive to mirth and good humour. After dinner, dancing, cards, &c. all this with the most consummate ease, being their constant train of living, nobody is put out of their way,



nor the servants running and scampering over each other, &c. But I will no longer attempt to describe what I flatter myself you will be soon able to judge of from ocular demonstration. How greatly I feel myself obliged by the preference you give my country, I need not repeat *here*. You know my opinion, I will not say partiality, to the Scotch, since all I can possibly say in praise of those I have the honour and pleasure to know, is, they merit a much abler pen barely to do them justice; yet thus far allow me to *say*, they are more universally sensible, *I think*, than the inhabitants of any country I know, consequently more agreeable, as well as valuable members of society; for sure that judgment which clears and enlightens the head, must *mend* the heart. Their young  
men

men have the politeness of the French, without their frivolity; the sobriety of a Spaniard, without his formality; the women are modest, well-bred, and in general handsome; support their dignity without insolence, are familiar without sinking into meanness. How far we have the happiness to resemble them I leave to you to decide, and I will now only assure *you*, if I can make a party to my mind, which I think is more than probable, I shall certainly make the tour of Scotland next summer. You know how long and ardently I have wished to do it. That your being *there*, my dear Madame, will greatly heighten my pleasures, is a truth I hope you are not now to learn, or that I am at all times, and in all climates, very faithfully and affectionately yours.

L E T:

## L E T T E R XLIX.

ALTHOUGH it is very uncommon with me, I own I did read over my last incoherent scrawl, before I sealed it. To account for my assurance in daring to send it to you afterwards, you must suppose the violent westerly winds we have lately had has blown over a little of the effronterie of a neighbour *nation*, and that I have profited by it. Not a jot, I assure you ; I retain the self-same degree of mauvais-honte I was so scandalously abused for in France. In the first place, the post could not stay for me to write another letter, and I should not  
forely

forely dread your criticisms, was you less partial to me, having always observed those best qualified to make them are infinitely superior to the vanity of raising their merits on others ruin. But to my purpose—On the recital of my scrawl, I found I had not answered a single syllable of your most friendly and agreeable letter. To begin then—my mind is certainly more at ease, but will never be able to forget my estimable *friend*, and the real loss I sustained in *his* death; a loss I freely allow my reason ought to submit to: but alas! that reason but ill supports its sovereignty over an heart too tender in its friendships, though totally abstracted from passion. What an unintelligible jargon would this appear to the world in general, and how fortunate ought I to think myself, who have been able to select

lect so many out of the very few who understand the language of the uncontaminated heart, and delight to read its simple dictates. Allowing Lady B——'s friendship for Bonaria was not altogether so pure, so unmixed as mine, I surely should pity, not condemn her: we are not our own makers. I begin to judge ingratitude constitutional, and incline to forgive Lady B—— every species of it she has practised towards me. An early religious education will give some degree of sentiment to those it was not born with, and never fails to strengthen it greatly where it meets it: in short, it enlarges the mind, and raises it above this groveling universe; makes us know and feel, on every occasion, we have a soul, just, benevolent, prone to imitate the all-wise beneficent hand which formed

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ed it. This *she* wanted : was with great youth and uncommon beauty thrown into the world, married to a man incapable of conducting her safe through it, whose low birth and disagreeable turn must render *him* odious to any woman of fashion and taste, and *her* suspected by the gay, airy part of the world, (though perhaps perfectly innocent) of a thousand gallantries. That I lived much with her you know, as well as that I would not urge a falsehood in my own defence, much less in that of another, who seems not to deserve it from me ; and I seriously, nay, solemnly, assure you, I never saw any thing in her behaviour could shock the nicest virtue ; and I believe you will think, sans compliment, mine may claim that appellation. I have (as we all must have) seen, nay, been acquainted

acquainted with, women of gallantry of the highest rank ; but I never saw one whose character seemed to me equivocal ; it always struck me, that Heaven had (like Cain) set a mark on them. I loved and admired Lady B——, and firmly believed the world cruelly injured her. I cannot yet persuade myself otherwise. Laugh at my foolish credulity ; I know you will ; but admire the candour, the honesty of heart of, my dear Madame, your affectionate and unalterable friend:

F I N I S.

H.C.

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